UTILIZING ARTS AND CULTURE TO MITIGATE THE NEGATIVE IMPACTS OF TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE ON COMMUNITIES

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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16. Abstract (Limit: 250 words)

There is strong evidence to support incorporating arts, culture, and creative placemaking into transportation practices to improve engagement outcomes, mitigate impacts to communities, and build trust between communities and institutions. However, general confusion around the role arts and culture can and should play in transportation planning, plus limited experience with this type of approach, have constrained integration and, in some cases, also hindered implementation success. The case studies in this report overwhelmingly demonstrate the value of incorporating arts and culture practices through increases in participation and public trust, especially among underrepresented groups. Yet the lack of evaluations of the successful programs or projects, documentation of processes, and comprehension of the relevant funding options and collaborative partnership opportunities stalls replication. Furthermore, the lack of clear policy goals and staff training and support means these successful interventions are not sustainable within DOT culture and practice. Shifting the focus away from outdated arguments about the role of art, culture, and creative placemaking in transportation planning and toward a focus on what is relevant to community identity and intentional engagement will enable DOTs to capitalize on a cost-saving and trust-building suite of creative placemaking engagement tools. It will also begin to help make up for past decisions that have harmed unrepresented communities.

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FINAL REPORT

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First and foremost, we would like to thank MnDOT for funding this research. Many state departments of transportation would not consider this very important topic as the focus of fundable research, so we commend MnDOT for taking some first steps toward better incorporating arts and culture into its transportation projects and in thinking about how to make up for past inequities in transportation planning and construction. We particularly thank Jessica Oh for her many conversations with us about the inner workings of MnDOT.

We also thank members of the Technical Advisory Panel (TAP) for their valuable contributions to our understanding of transportation and arts in Minnesota. The presentations that individual TAP members gave to us early in the project were very helpful, and we hope we have summarized them accurately in this report. Beyond that, we thank the TAP representatives from local and regional art organizations who urged us to push a little harder in our research and recommendations.

Jessica Oh and Jackie Jiran at MnDOT have both been very patient and understanding with our sometimes-delayed memos and reports. They have also done a great job of helping us revise our budgets as additional opportunities came our way.

Thanks also go to Gabrielle Capone, a Geography and Geographic Information Systems major at the University of Illinois, who designed and produced the maps.

Finally, we offer our sincere thanks to everyone who agreed to be interviewed by us. Not every interviewee wanted to be mentioned by name or organization in the report, so some uncredited contributors appear in the various case studies. Nevertheless, we are grateful to them for sharing their time and expertise with us, since for many of these projects, there is no other way to know how it went than to talk to someone who was there.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF TABLES

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Research Objectives

This research project examines nine case studies and four artist-in-resident programs that demonstrate arts and cultural approaches that transportation agencies can use when engaging affected communities, especially Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) and low-income communities already traumatized by the disruption from infrastructure projects. The overarching takeaway from this work is that there is strong evidence to support incorporating arts and cultural approaches into transportation practices, to improve engagement outcomes, mitigate impacts to communities, and build trust between communities and institutions. Although measures of success are evident in our case studies, we found ad hoc adoption of these approaches by state Departments of Transportation (DOTs) and we discovered general confusion among transportation planners, project managers, staff and subcontractors around how to envision, design, and execute arts and cultural approaches. We also discovered limited DOT experience incorporating these practices into transportation projects. Based on these findings, we developed our research objectives as follows:

- We establish a framework for the various roles arts and culture play in the case studies.
- We describe the outcomes in our case studies and relate them to the impacts they have on communities.
- We detail the ways projects were initiated and executed and describe partnerships.
- We offer recommendations for how the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) and all DOTs can more easily and effectively use these approaches within their system of policies and practices to the benefit of the institutions and the communities they serve.

Background

Adopted in November 2021, the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) increased spending by $550 billion on a host of infrastructure needs including roads, bridges and highway and pedestrian safety (IIJA 2021).

> *"We'll create good jobs for millions of Americans…and we'll do it all to withstand the devastating effects of climate change and promote environmental justice."*
> President Joe Biden, 2022 State of the Union (J40 2022)

The bipartisan law, guided by the federal government's Justice40 initiative, which establishes the goal of ensuring 40 percent of overall benefits from new federal investments flow to disadvantaged communities, offers DOTs the ability to redress a history of institutional racism and classism in the distribution, siting and repair of infrastructure projects.

MnDOT initiated this research project to explore opportunities related to enrolling arts and cultural practices in efforts to mitigate the negative impacts of transportation infrastructure on BIPOC and

lower-income communities. The National Institutes of Health notes that “Arts and cultural engagement activities have long been found to support wellbeing within the general population” (NIH, 2022) and according to the American Planning Association, arts and cultural engagement approaches are successful in “strengthening the degree of public commitment to planning processes and making more perspectives available to decision makers” (APA, 2011). The enrollment of artists and culture bearers to engage with community during the planning, design and implementation processes elevates cultural influences and neighborhood characteristics as valued community assets, lifts local voices in design and problem-solving work, improves and enhances the function of physical spaces, and results in better outcomes and relationships overall.

A recent example of a successful local project is Ramsey County’s $14.7 million Dale Street bridge update, which was underscored by Saint Paul’s mayor as much more than an expanse of concrete with four lanes and pedestrian and bike improvements (STRIB 2022). The bridge’s public art tells the story of devastation and trauma experienced by the African American community of Rondo between 1956 and 1968 when the construction of the freeway resulted in the loss of homes and business and the severing of a once thriving neighborhood. The art is an outcome of institutional efforts to deeply engage the community before creating the final plan for bridge reconstruction. Local artists and culture bearers were enrolled in a two-year creative placemaking effort that recognized the devastation and trauma of the past and offered a way forward that valued community knowledge, needs and input about this infrastructure project.

The Dale Street project exemplifies the value of incorporating arts and cultural approaches, especially when working with already traumatized communities. Artists and culture bearers act as translators and trusted allies within the community, and project outcomes produced with their collaboration are reflective of, and meaningful to, the community. More importantly, they enable transportation planners and project managers to engage with and value the narratives and experiences of the community and to ensure that these narratives and experiences are reflected in project outcomes.

In the last several decades, DOTs have worked to improve methods of public engagement by adding on-line surveys, participation at community meetings, and booths at community events to the standard practice of informing communities about transportation infrastructure projects. These efforts improve the reach of information, but still fail to connect with historically underrepresented communities because they cannot effectively address language and cultural barriers or past experiences with discrimination (DeFilippis, Fisher et al. 2010). The legacy of institutional racism and classism and practices that prioritized vehicles over communities physically scarred neighborhoods and damaged institutional relationships with lower-income, indigenous, immigrant, and communities of color, who were disproportionately impacted by transportation’s expansion in cities, suburbs and rural landscapes (Jakle and Wilson 1992). The examples detailed in this report offer opportunities for DOTs to own their growing commitment to successful community engagement and relationship building, and the clarity and detail provided about arts and cultural approaches in the case studies enables DOTs to move away from entrenched aesthetic interpretations and open more areas of policy and practice to the benefits of these approaches.

Methodologies

Defining Arts and Culture

For this research project, we considered how arts and culture are defined in the planning and community development literature and as an emerging trend in engagement approaches. While not comprehensive, the list below is most relevant to the case studies we examined. It provided a framework for analysis of our case studies.

- Public art is the enduring visual impact on the landscape and the most common definition of arts and culture understood and used by institutions. It can be produced for purposes of beautification or in support of community identity on public or private property. It can be produced formally or informally in collaborations between governments, organizations, businesses, artists, and community members. It can be produced in many visual forms from sculpture and murals to aesthetic design enhancements.
- Arts activations are ephemeral practices in arts and culture that mirror public arts' spatial and purpose definitions, but the outcome is temporary and can take several creative forms from visual to music or performance.
- Arts and cultural engagement
    - Artists and culture bearers are enrolled during the planning and/or design process of a project. They can engage community members about a public art aspect of the project, or they can be asked to use their arts and cultural practices to facilitate creative engagement between project and design managers and community members. The engagement can produce ephemeral art during the process, or there can be a permanent public art piece as an outcome.
    - Artists and culture bearers are enrolled to interact with and engage planning and community development staff with the goal of enacting systems change. The artists and culture bearers can be asked to consider an issue, practice or project and offer an alternative and creative perspective as a resolution.

We note that creative placemaking is a term the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) and arts and community development organizations use when referring to a more active and actionable approach to community engagement, planning, design and implementation of infrastructure related projects. Creative placemaking defines collaborative efforts between partners to integrate art and culture, in the forms described above, into many phases of the development process to ensure a deeper engagement with community.

The Concept of Mitigation

We also considered the concept of mitigation as it relates to MnDOT's policies and practices of engagement. In general, planners at all levels of government and in private practice refer to regulatory tools like zoning, ordinances and building codes to mitigate the risks of development on community

members. The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and state environmental policies require additional assessments to mitigate impacts to human and natural environments.

A history of discriminatory practices in planning and development, however, failed to mitigate equitably among all populations, and today a disproportionately high percentage of minority and lower-income populations are affected by adverse community, human health and environmental issues (EJ 1994). Therefore, the practice of mitigation is both pre-emptive and redress.

Transportation projects are shaped by regulatory requirements and NEPA (and the federal Executive Order 12898 on Environmental Justice). It is within this framework that MnDOT and other state DOTs engage the public through informational and environmental review processes, with an aim to foster nondiscrimination. We sought to understand and highlight the mitigative efforts, whether pre-emptive or redress-oriented in each of our case studies, and to recommend ways DOTs could improve these efforts.

Case Study Selection

Our selection process for our case studies is described in detail in the introductory chapter but to summarize our process, we sought projects that:

- Included artists' participation in planning and/or mitigation processes
- Encompassed a broad range of arts and cultural approaches
- Addressed issues of equity
- Engaged DOTs directly or tangentially
- Included a range of geographies

Table ES.1: Case studies and arts-in-residence programs

Project	Location
Case Studies	
Atlanta Regional Commission	Atlanta, Georgia
Streetcar Return	El Paso, Texas
Detour Signs	Grand Marais, Minnesota
Mariposa Creek Parkway	Mariposa, California
Nolensville Pike	Nashville, Tennessee
Art Bridges	Pawtucket, Rhode Island
Jade-Midway Placemaking Project	Portland, Oregon
Chicano Park	San Diego, California
South Park Avenue	Tucson, Arizona
Artist-in-Residence Programs	
CDOT	Chattanooga, Tennessee
LADOT	Los Angeles, California
MnDOT	Minnesota
WSDOT	Washington

Data Gathering

Using a mix of strategies, we gathered details about our case studies. We sought interviews with agency representatives, collaborative partners and artists. We culled archival information to determine how the projects were represented in different literatures such as planning documents and newspaper articles. We mapped project locations and looked for images of each project. Since some of our projects did have public art outcomes, we engaged two artists to produce photographic images of the sites (Chicano Park and Nolensville Pike).

We also conducted a literature review to establish the historical context for transportation development and the disproportionately high impacts to minority and lower-income populations, and to lay out the evolution of the intertwining of arts, culture and urban development.

Finally, we engaged several departments at MnDOT to understand their processes and the general flow of activity associated with MnDOT projects.

Summary of Findings and Recommendations

For each of our case studies and artist-in-residence programs, we introduce the geography and the transportation project details. We provide background information about the history of the area, the issues or concerns the project addresses, and the role arts and cultural approaches play in the development and outcomes of the project. We offer findings that detail the organizational structure of the project and the arts and cultural approach, defining partners and collaborators, financing, and timeline. With a focus on the arts and cultural aspects of the project, we describe the process in which the approach was employed, and we illustrate barriers and constraints collaborators experienced while enacting the approach. We provide a summary of the outcome and offer takeaways for consideration about what worked and did not work.

We bring together our takeaways from our analysis of each case study and artist-in-resident program in Chapter 5, offering overarching findings, linking these back to our case studies and making recommendations for action in consideration of MnDOT's current practices and policies.

Case Studies

For our nine case studies we use three broad categories of lessons learned:

- Lessons internal to the institution
- Lessons about relationships between institutions and community
- Lessons for ways of understanding arts and culture

Our five overarching findings for these case studies, offered with specific actions, are summarized below:

Table ES.2: Case studies categories, findings and recommendations

Category	Finding	Actions
Internal to the institution	Lack of institutional memory and documentation of arts and cultural approaches is damaging	● Appoint a facilitator to take on the role of maintaining institutional memory ● Closely document the engagement process and evaluate the successes and challenges for creative placemaking projects
Internal to the institution	State DOTs and other large bureaucracies can do more than you might think	● Shift the perspective away from older, traditional ways of thinking about the role of art in transportation planning as simply aesthetic enhancements, to a focus on how arts, culture and creative placemaking can help institutions meet improved engagement goals that acknowledge community identity, consider community health and practice inclusivity. ● Consider the broader processes that transportation and mobility are part of, such as housing accessibility, small-business success and biodiversity in order to tap into additional partner and funding resources, alterative creative placemaking practices for improved engagement outcomes, and alternative interpretations of the role arts and culture will play in state DOT practices overall.
Relationships between institutions and community	Community trust is incredibly important and incredibly fragile	● Incorporating arts and culture has cost-savings potential, since it can build better community relationships upfront and avoid the costs of opposition delays. ● Transparency and good communication through regular updates, even if nothing is moving forward, are essential to maintaining the trust of affected communities. And sharing details about restrictions and constraints faced by the DOT, such as funding prohibitions and internal regulations, can alleviate potential mistrust. ● Public engagement might involve multiple iterations between DOT staff, local community, and other relevant organizations before mutual understandings are achieved. ● Educating DOT staff about local and cultural knowledge, such as language, and enrolling the right partners, artists and culture bearers, is essential in gaining the respect and support of

		the community while also making the engagement process more equitable and useful. ● Beyond explaining technical terms at a public meeting or providing the glossary in a report, engineers and planners need a good understanding of the issues and concerns of the local community so they can present technical solutions or findings within the context of those issues and concerns.
Relationships between institutions and community	Engagement efforts that incorporate arts and culture succeed in reaching communities not traditionally heard from	● Use arts and culture bearers as part of engagement processes to enhance existing outreach methods.
Ways of understanding arts and culture	When artists are engaged early in the process and allowed more creative freedom, better results follow	● Let artists lead as early in the process as possible. ● Respect artists as workers, entrepreneurs and contractors whose contributions are more than aesthetic. ● Ensure that artists as businesses have the tools to engage with state bureaucracies and that those bureaucracies in turn are equipped to support artists' work.

Artist-in-Residence Programs

From our analysis of four artist-in-residence programs, we offer this summary of our findings and recommendations:

<u>Findings</u>

- Introducing a program aimed at outside-the-box thinking into an organization with long-term taxpayer funded projects and accountable actions is difficult
- Artists experience isolation and uncertainty about expectations
- DOT staff experience creative work as time burdens and have uncertainty about expectations

<u>Recommendations</u>

- DOTs can partner with an arts organization to help with the onboarding and establishment of expectations
- DOTs can introduce clear expectations to staff, establish the relationship with the artist as that of a contractor, and ensure actionable time within staff schedules for creative work

Conclusions

The White House Domestic Policy Council and the NEA recently hosted the all-day Healing, Bridging, Thriving Summit (NEA 2024) focused on sharing insights and exploring opportunities "for arts organizations and artists to contribute to the health and well-being of individuals and communities, invigorate physical spaces, fuel democracy, and foster equitable outcomes." Speakers included government officials, policymakers, artists, academics, advocates and arts leaders who offered examples for enabling the incorporation of arts and culture into healthcare as well as into civic and physical infrastructure practices and policies. The summit, which included a panel discussion focused specifically on the "crucial role" arts and culture can play in the planning, design and implementation of "large federal infrastructure investments," culminates decades of research demonstrating the value of arts and culture to society, health and wellbeing, the economy and education (AftA 2014), and supports the findings locally that show 74 percent of Minnesotans have a strong engagement with arts and culture (MCA 2019).

Arts and cultural approaches have been adopted by regional councils and transit agencies, counties, and cities across the U.S. (FRBSF 2019). Local adoption ranges from Bloomington's creative placemaking initiative, which is supported by a department and a commission (Bloomington 2024), to Grand Rapids' adoption of creative placemaking practices by its economic development agency as a "community development strategy" that "integrates arts and culture to support, preserve and grow existing community assets" (GREDA 2024).

MnDOT, and DOTs in general, have been slow to adopt a broad agency consensus in alignment with internal department support structures and staff training needed to move ad hoc success into sustainable DOT culture and practice. We offer the results of this research project as a demonstration of the value in incorporating arts and cultural approaches in transportation planning, design and implementation and as a roadmap for adoption of demonstrated successful practices. Outcomes such as increased public participation in engagement efforts and improved public trust, especially among underrepresented groups, are beneficial to the institution and the community.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

A legacy of institutional racism, lack of community engagement, and prioritization of vehicles over people has left scars on the social and physical landscapes of the U.S. communities traumatized by past decisions that bulldozed their neighborhoods for the sake of the transportation needs of others. These communities deserve a voice in rectifying past mistakes surrounding the planning process and placement of new transportation infrastructure, as well as in future decision-making. One way to bridge the gap between transportation agencies and marginalized communities is through arts and culture. This research project goes into depth on nine case studies that demonstrate how arts and culture approaches can produce better transportation outcomes and work to heal past wounds. Based on interviews and document analysis, the case studies illuminate project impacts, successes, challenges and opportunities arising from social, organizational, financial and physical contexts. We also develop an understanding of the types of partnerships that have enabled these projects. It is our hope that MnDOT and similar agencies can use the results to initiate and sustain artistic partnerships to strengthen community ties and produce better transportation projects in the future.

In this chapter, we lay out the methodology of our project: how we came up with our case studies, how we gathered data, and how we analyzed that data. We also briefly explain the context in which MnDOT operates, focusing on those policies and regulations most likely to affect the agency's ability to implement arts and culture programming and opportunities.

1.1 METHODOLOGY

1.1.1 Selection Process

In selecting our case studies, we relied on three main criteria. First, the case studies we identified were intended to give examples of projects where artists participated in the planning — or even mitigation — process. We wanted to go beyond examples of public art as a finished object and instead consider the process, including how artists might help bridge the gap between community and agency through the planning, design and construction stages. With this in mind, we also considered some projects that included a finished piece of art as one of the outcomes. Nevertheless, most of our cases were not about a physical product so much as a creative engagement of the community and its expertise, or an example of creative placemaking.

Second, we chose case studies not only about the present but also about the past. In other words, each case project recognizes that past transportation decisions or investments resulted in uneven and inequitable impacts on already-disadvantaged populations, and the current project is intended to alleviate some of those impacts. The overall project might or might not explicitly center on equity, but it needs to be one of the considerations.

Finally, because MnDOT has supported this report in hopes of learning how to improve its own processes and policies, we concentrated on case studies involving large departments of transportation. Because of the complexities involved in these projects, not only bringing together different stakeholders

but negotiating different scales of regulation and funding, we felt it would be most useful to MnDOT to consider projects that involved a large DOT. Unfortunately, because so few U.S. transportation-related creative placemaking projects involved a state DOT, sometimes case studies include a large-city DOT instead.

After these three initial criteria were met, we selected our case studies to get a mix of several other qualities. First, we aimed to cover different geographic regions of the U.S. and a mix of urban, suburban and rural locations. Second, we wanted a mix of project modes, including roads, pedestrians, cycling, and one or two unusual transit examples. Third, because of the difficulty of finding funding for unconventional projects like these, we wanted a mix of funding sources— federal grants, state DOT budget, local foundation grants, etc. — to demonstrate the different possibilities that are available. Finally, we wanted a mix of coalitions and partnerships, especially to show how the ability to effect change might differ from one partner to the next.

Our starting point for developing the list of case studies was *The Scenic Route*, a guide produced by Smart Growth America and Transportation for America that identified nearly 50 case studies involving arts and transportation. Using our criteria above, we whittled them into a dozen or so cases for further exploration. We also drew on our own knowledge and networks to find interesting examples.

Few examples fit the three required criteria. Within that list, we nevertheless managed to achieve a balance of geographic regions, urban-suburban-rural projects, and a mix of project modes.

Our initial list of 15 case studies was presented to MnDOT's Technical Advisory Panel (TAP) in October 2022 for input. We then selected 12 finalists, including three from Minnesota, with three alternatives. Of these 12, we were able to fully develop nine case studies, including one from Minnesota. The remaining projects either were still in the very early stages, had happened long enough ago that no one was left at the relevant agencies to comment on them, or otherwise turned out to be not worth pursuing.

The Scenic Route also included a handful of artist-in-residence (AIR) programs: two state-level (Minnesota and Washington) programs and two city-level (Chattanooga and Los Angeles). AIR programs are very important to the goal of transforming practices within a state agency but are not directly about mitigating harm from infrastructure within communities. We therefore decided to treat them separately in their own chapter within the report.

1.1.2 Case Study List (alphabetical order by city or county)

1.1.2.1 ARC: Atlanta, Georgia

Partners: Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC), Arts Leaders of Metro Atlanta (ALMA), Livable Centers Initiative (LCI), city of Tucker, community-based organizations

Through a series of creative placemaking initiatives and a metro-wide artist and arts organization survey, ARC created an *Arts in Planning* handbook and has facilitated the handbook's practices throughout the work of the regional planning agency and has developed collaborative relationships and projects with community, arts and cultural organizations from underrepresented counties and demographics.

Figure 1.1 ARC (Atlanta, Georgia)

1.1.2.2 El Paso Trolley: El Paso, Texas

Pa Partners: Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), Sun Metro, city of El Paso, artist A grassroots

A grassroots project by an artist from El Paso developed into the return of El Paso's streetcar system, which had been closed since the 1970s. The artist started a guerilla marketing campaign that asked the community to think creatively about their transportation issues, resulting in an embracement of a streetcar system. As the concept within the community gained popularity, the artist persuaded the city to restore the original streetcars, which were still in storage.

Figure 1.2 El Paso Trolley (El Paso, Texas)

1.1.2.3 Detour Signs: Grand Marais, Minnesota

Partners: MnDOT, city of Grand Marais, artist, community

To mitigate some of the impact of the disruption caused by the reconstruction of Highway 61 through the center of town, the city of Grand Marais enrolled an artist to engage the community in a storytelling exercise about life's detours. Stories from this work were chosen and printed on roadway signs and affixed to area highway signs.

Figure 1.3 Detour Signs (Grand Marais, Minnesota)

1.1.2.4 Map of the state of Georgia highlighting the project area of Atlanta.Mariposa Creek Parkway: Mariposa County, California

Partners: Caltrans, Mariposa County Planning Department, Mariposa Arts Council, Smart Growth America (SGA), Atlas Lab

Despite the town's proximity to Yosemite recreation, tourist traffic congestion limits access for locals. Caltrans granted funds to Mariposa County to add a multi-model Mariposa Creek Parkway. Using design and culturally relevant practices, the county and Caltrans engaged many more from the rural and indigenous community than in the past and proceeded with their input and respect for their practices with nature.

Figure 1.4 Mariposa Creek Parkway (Mariposa County, California)

1.1.2.5 Nolensville Pike: South Nashville, Tennessee

Partners: Tennessee Department of Transportation, Nashville Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), Greater Nashville Regional Council, Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County, Metro Department of Public Works, Conexión Américas, Salahadeen Center, Nashville Metro Arts, Nashville Civic Design Center

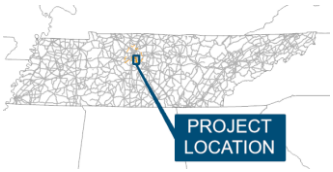

Figure 1.5 Nolensville Pike (South Nashville, Tennessee)

Conexión Américas partnered with Tennessee Department of Transportation, Nashville Area MPO and Metro Department of Public Works to create a bilingual crosswalk and develop a collaborative arts plan that calls for the equitable redevelopment of the transportation infrastructure in this immigrant and refugee community of Latinx, Kurdish, Somali and Sudanese populations. The plan's process involved student-led bus shelter and public space design projects, an oral history project, and culturally specific creative asset workshops, community conversations and design prototypes around pedestrian safety.

1.1.2.6 Art Bridges, Pawtucket, Rhode Island

Partners: Rhode Island Department of Transportation (RIDOT), National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), Rhode Island State Arts Council, city of Pawtucket, Tourism Council, the School Department, local theater groups, local Community Action Program (CAP) agencies, the Slater Mill

Figure 1.6 Art Bridges (Pawtucket, Rhode Island)

Art Bridges Pawtucket was a city-run project with the following goals: improve the pedestrian connection between the neighborhoods and the downtown through the provision of public art along the highway overpasses; promote the city as a creative community to the state and region; design and install public art that reflects all of Pawtucket's diverse communities and cultures; and get community "buy-in" from all of the city's diverse communities and cultures during the public outreach process. Despite good public

outreach, the scale of the proposal to transform the bridges proved to be an obstacle to completing the project.

1.1.2.7 Jade-Midway Corridor: Portland, Oregon

Partners: city of Portland, Metro, TriMet, city of Gresham, APANO (Asian Pacific American Neighborhood Organization), Multi-Cultural Collaborative

The Jade-Midway Placemaking Project grew from a proposed bus rapid transit route planned for a major arterial running through two very ethnically diverse neighborhoods of East Portland, where fears of gentrification and displacement were prominent among low-income and non-English-speaking populations. Collaborations between the regional government, the transit agency, two municipalities, artists and community organizations showed great creativity in their use of arts in outreach and engagement and in seeking funding sources.

Figure 1.7 Jade-Midway Corridor (Portland, Oregon)

1.1.2.8 Chicano Park: San Diego, California

Partners: Caltrans, city of San Diego, Chicano Park Steering Committee, Barrio Logan community, Chicano artists

The murals in Chicano Park are internationally recognized and historically protected, representing the Latinx community's ongoing efforts to mitigate impacts from freeway infrastructure that cut through and deeply traumatized the Barrio Logan neighborhood more than five decades ago. Although the artworks were community-initiated efforts at healing, Caltrans has respected and learned from the artists' processes and now models other community mitigating efforts on the collaborative work it has done in the park.

Figure 1.8 Chicano Park (San Diego, California)

1.1.2.9 South Park Avenue: Tucson, Arizona

Partners: Federal Transit Administration, Tucson Department of Transportation (TDOT), city of Tucson, Tucson Urban League, South Park Neighborhood Business Association, University of Arizona, HUD

The South Park neighborhood was one of a few places in Tucson where Black people could purchase land, build homes and start businesses. From 1995 through 1999, TDOT collaborated with residents and businesses on a series of improvements that increased transit, pedestrian and bicycle safety and accessibility; enhanced commercial district aesthetics along South Park Avenue; and reinforced the community's sense of pride in its unique history and culture.

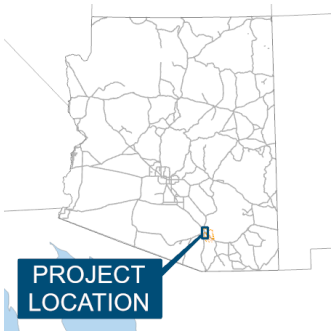

Figure 1.9 South Park Avenue (Tucson, Arizona)

1.2 POLICY AND REGULATORY CONTEXT OF MnDOT

Like all state transportation departments, MnDOT operates within the constraints of state and federal law. National standards around engineering and planning, and how those standards are interpreted, also shape what can and cannot be done. Furthermore, there may be informal understandings of standard practice, especially in absence of regulation or legislation. This section outlines the various elements of policy and practice that potentially or truly impact MnDOT's ability to successfully incorporate arts and culture into its existing activities: how arts and culture are understood, funding constraints on incorporating arts and culture, and engagement and equity as possible avenues for greater arts and culture integration.

1.2.1 Defining and Incorporating Art

MnDOT already officially incorporates art forms into its policies and procedures, including art used on rights of way or within infrastructure as aesthetic features. An official policy was implemented in 2016 after a 12-year development process that makes clear how public art can be integrated into transportation infrastructure. The policy lays out the difference between art and aesthetics, with the latter referring to an aesthetically enhanced necessary structural element such as railings, cement or lighting that can be modified for visual purposes. "Art" in this policy refers to non-necessary or non-essential elements of physical infrastructure. By definition, it is an add-on outside the formal planning or design process and must be initiated, funded and carried out by individuals external to MnDOT in the right-of-way areas near essential transportation infrastructure.

MnDOT can only accept "donations" of art in these right-of-way areas, which the artists themselves must install and maintain for the life of the artwork. Artists must work with local governments, who can apply to MnDOT to have art added within their jurisdictions. Counties, neighborhood associations, transit agencies, other state agencies and artists are not eligible to request public art along the right of way, even if they can fund it, unless they complete a request and collaborate with a local government agency. Once artworks appear in the right of way, MnDOT has the right to remove it for reasons of maintenance, safety or reconstruction, without necessarily telling the artist or local government agency ahead of time.

One way MnDOT could build on its right-of-way art policy is to broaden the understanding of art within the agency. MnDOT could explore possibilities by discussing what transportation purpose arts and culture might play with respect to safety or maintenance. Especially by thinking of art as a process or performance — not solely as a physical object — it becomes easy to see how the DOTs in our Los Angeles and Washington state case studies successfully incorporate art into their policies and practices. Getting people safely to where they want to go is a transportation purpose, and arts interventions can help engage the public in new ways around issues of traffic safety.

The aesthetic aspect of MnDOT's policy is under the direction of the Bridges and Structures Department, where project design and approval takes place. Again, these are specific elements of infrastructure that are being made more visually attractive to slightly mitigate the effect of the infrastructure on the

receiving community. There is no specific process for visual quality in the policy, but in general, the individual in charge of visual-quality management acts as a liaison between the community in question and MnDOT. Community here is defined as the people who live near a proposed infrastructure project. Large-enough projects have a separate arts and culture committee composed of local residents. Outcomes of this aspect of the policy include design references to local places embedded in bridge railings or on concrete walls. In addition to approving these subtle references, the visual quality management process has resulted in articulated blank spaces being incorporated into MnDOT's infrastructure so that public art can be added by the local government later. In general, however, this public art opportunity has not been executed in a timely manner, or at all, by local jurisdictions.

In short, MnDOT has incorporated art into infrastructure and rights of way based on current policy and practices either through subtle enhancement of structural elements, or in rights of way when requested, coordinated, funded and maintained by local governments. Thinking about art as more than a physical object and reflecting on its value as a means of providing a transportation purpose could build on these existing approaches, as demonstrated by our case studies.

1.2.2 Funding Source Limitations on Thinking Outside the Box

One reason the use of arts and culture has been fairly limited at MnDOT is related to funding restrictions issued by state and federal regulators and legislators. For example, the state constitution of Minnesota requires that what are called "trunk highway funds" go to "constructing, improving, and maintaining a trunk highway system." According to the current legislative interpretation and MnDOT's cost participation policy, aesthetics can be part of the highway system because they are embedded in the essential physical elements of the infrastructure. Art, however, is argued as not directly serving a transportation purpose, and cannot be funded by trunk highway funds. To demonstrate how open to interpretation the arts and aesthetic policy is, in 2015 and 2017, Minnesota Republican legislators introduced bills to prohibit any public funds from being used for aesthetic enhancements to road infrastructure, despite this being a long-standing practice. Furthermore, MnDOT has funded other non-transportation-purpose uses in rights of way, such as landscaping, which serves an ecological purpose, and noise buffers and traffic calming, which serve as community health and safety mitigation purposes. These flexes in interpretation suggest that MnDOT can exercise more limberness in thinking about and using arts and culture for transportation purposes.

One avenue used by other agencies to think more broadly about the look and presence of transportation infrastructure is known as context-sensitive solutions (CSS). CSS is based on a combination of design and engineering standards from the Federal Highway Administration. It considers the value that an improvement will add to community, environment and transportation systems, reaching beyond the strictest definition of a transportation purpose. MnDOT was one of four state departments of transportation to do a pilot study of CSS, and while MnDOT wrote a policy to implement it, implementation was never carried out because of constraints around funding amounts and uses.

1.2.3 Engagement and Equity

We demonstrate throughout this report, however, that a possible avenue for incorporating and benefiting from arts and culture uses in transportation planning and design is through public engagement practices. Public engagement is one of several steps in the project development process, including planning, scoping, preliminary design, final design, construction and maintenance. Increasingly, MnDOT is trying to think of the project development process as having engagement, engineering and environmental review happening more or less simultaneously, so these three lanes can be integrated as they go instead of applied after the fact. MnDOT adopted a formal policy about public engagement in 2016, which was updated in 2021 to clarify the relationship between the state government and tribal nations. The public engagement component of the planning process specifically refers to involving the public in problem-solving or decision-making. According to the International Association for Public Participation's "Spectrum" tool, public participation can range from merely *informing* the public, to *consulting* with the public on specific elements, to *involving* the public in the process, to *collaborating* with the public on the project elements, to *empowering* the public to take a lead role in transportation planning (IAP2). In practice, most action by MnDOT takes place at the "inform" end of the spectrum. By establishing advisory committees, MnDOT is moving its process toward public involvement and collaboration. MnDOT is unlikely to fully empower the public, since communities don't have the capacity to execute long-term and complex infrastructure projects, but some level of empowerment is achievable and encouraged, especially under the directives of the USDOT's Justice40 Initiative.

> *"For the first time, the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) has centered Equity as a Department-wide strategic goal via its* FY 2022-2026 Strategic Plan*. This is a critical step to institutionalizing equity across the Department's policies and programs, with the aim of reducing inequities across our transportation systems and the communities they affect."* (USDOT, 2022)

To close equity gaps in planning and access to transportation, Justice40 aims to address decades of underinvestment and harm to BIPOC and low-income communities. Additionally, the initiative looks to the future by directing resources to "communities most impacted by climate change, pollution, and environmental hazards." This equity work at the USDOT level encourages and supports state DOT efforts. Transportation equity work is relatively new within MnDOT. It refers to a statewide effort to examine decision-making processes, including the project development process, to acknowledge past harms and try to mitigate them through current and future actions. One of the first steps in MnDOT's process was to get feedback from more than 1,000 people on the specific language used to describe equity, a process indicating the importance and delicate nature of the work. An example of a past wrong is the way in which interstate freeways were targeted to African American neighborhoods in the mid-20th century, in part because of lower property values and less political power to oppose them. This is relevant in the Twin Cities, where disproportionate impacts to BIPOC and lower-income communities resulted from the development of the Interstate 35 and Interstate 94 freeways. The consequences of past decisions include not only increased exposure to particulate matter and noise today but the loss of generational wealth due to being displaced from homes and businesses.

Justice40 builds on existing federal requirements around environmental justice, such as Executive Order 12898, which in 1994, required agencies to consider disproportionate impacts on low-income and minority communities, including engagement of those communities in the decision-making process. As noted above, this engagement has often come at the "informing" end of the spectrum. Projects that trigger environmental impact review under the National Environmental Policy (NEPA) require consideration of environmental justice impacts, but this review does not necessarily mean that the legacy of past impacts will be considered, only that the current project under review does not disproportionately harm specific neighborhoods. This is the extension that Justice40 provides, thinking about the history of harm that BIPOC and low-income communities have faced and how to alleviate that with current projects.

The conversation around transportation equity planning connects to the broader societal impacts of health and wealth, making transparent the need to move beyond engineering and design conversations focused on the movement of vehicles. And public engagement is an important part of equity work and conversations about societal impacts. Equity work is aimed at mitigating past harms and minimizing future harms. Individuals and communities who have been most affected by past inequities in transportation planning decisions are least likely to have representation at the planning and design table. As the only form of engagement, simply informing the community about projects already engineered for development shuts down conversations about how projects might be changed and improved to reduce impacts. Most informational methods to publicly engage underrepresented groups fall short because these community members are unable to take time from work and family obligations, have difficulty traveling to public meetings, and have built-up distrust in government and institutions from past decisions. Further limits to equitable input about projects derive from how consulting with local communities is managed. The focus may be on the aesthetics of a bridge structure rather than on understanding the economic and social impact the bridge itself will have on a community's accessibility, mobility, health and wealth opportunities.

Involving, collaborating and empowering, as forms of public participation, offer the ultimate opportunity for more open dialogue about the wider impacts of transportation infrastructure on communities. These forms of engagement do not erode MnDOT's role as the lead authority in the process. Instead, they enable and empower MnDOT in its equity work. And, as we demonstrate in the case-study chapter, arts and culture are essential tools in the engagement process. Artists and culture bearers from within affected communities can be enrolled as translators and interpreters, helping community members think through and understand projects by using artistic practices and overcoming the limits of institutional versus everyday language and concepts. Furthermore, they can unpack and uplift the nuances of place identity and cultural meaning for planners and project managers, helping MnDOT staff gain an understanding of the communities they are working with. Whether art is an end product of such engagements or not, valuing the role of art and culture in the planning and implementation process is evident in project outcomes.

1.3 OUTLINE OF THE STUDY

The remainder of this report functions as follows. Chapter 2 reviews the relevant academic and planning literature on three key areas that influenced our work: urban development history, arts and development, and environmental justice. The history of urban development, especially as it relates to transportation planning in the U.S., is defined as much by its negative effects on neighborhoods of color and low-income communities as by its innovation and progress. Arts and culture have been used in urban redevelopment of the past, and they remain synonymous with more recent efforts at urban revitalization. They also are an important part of the narrative about the need to better engage communities in the transportation planning and development process to ensure more equitable and just outcomes — and they tie the conversations around planning, development and environmental justice together. Chapter 3 presents the case studies, using a common template to detail each project's history, organizational partners, funding, outcomes and major takeaways. Chapter 4 focuses on the artist-in-residence programs, which are considered separately from the Chapter 3 case studies because of their orientation on process over project. Chapter 5 provides summary recommendations and conclusions.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 TRANSPORTATION PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT HISTORY

Transportation systems in the U.S. have been shaped by development goals and policies, and innovation and technological advancements, but they are also intrinsically linked to negative impacts to and the displacement of many communities, especially BIPOC and low-income communities. To the present day, the government subjects homes and businesses to removal and bisects and disconnects communities when developing transportation infrastructure. Historically, lower-income and BIPOC communities disproportionately experienced the impacts because the cost of disrupting their communities – for the purposes of eminent domain calculations – was lower, and, lacking political representation, these communities characterized the path of least resistance (Archer, 2020).

> While recognition of these past harms is now part of the transportation planning narrative, the funding and planning for the infrastructure work to repair these past harms is in its infancy. Part of the redress by state institutions is being accomplished by the expansion and diversification of public participation in the transportation process.

What follows is a brief reflection on the eras of transportation planning and development, followed by consideration of the role arts and culture has played in planning and community development. We provide a brief introduction to environmental justice to demonstrate its influence in fostering creative placemaking concepts. Finally, we help define creative placemaking, the engagement practice advocated for in the case studies that follow in chapter 2.

In the late 1800s, the City Beautiful movement rose to prominence. The movement came in response to congested and unhealthy conditions resulting from the rapid urbanization and industrialization of cities throughout the county (Hess, 2006). While intended to foster thoughtful planning to beautify, improve the health of, and better organize the city, the movement set the stage for future transportation harms by advocating for grand boulevards and parkways. The improved vistas offered by the wide promenades were often achieved by demolishing older and lower-income communities. The movement's emphasis on aesthetics, however, did bring about a more practical approach to what had been an ad-hoc development, but this more thoughtful and organized planning approach coincided with the rise in private automobile use.

As the mass production of cars unfurled into the 20th century, the profound transformation to urban landscapes was managed by civic leaders and landowners in a top-down fashion (Brown, 2006). The new City Practical movement added city planners and transportation engineers to the realm of urban development, and they sought a "scientific response to the urban traffic congestion problem," beginning a decades-long development practice that relied on expert knowledge in decision-making processes with little to no input from community members.

Automobile use reshaped cities (Jakle and Sculle, 2004). Streets were widened at the expense of sidewalk space, and buildings were torn down to make way for parking lots. At the national level, an interstate road system was conceptualized in the 1930s and institutionalized under the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1956 (Avila and Rose, 2009). Transportation engineers collaborated with state, county and city leaders, using billions of dollars in federal funds, to build an interconnected national highway system. They used the power of eminent domain to force the sale of private land to make way for highway (and later, freeway) construction. Highways out of the city connected the owners of newly built housing in the periphery to employers in the city. When combined with exclusionary zoning and other discriminatory land-use practices in the new suburban realm, highways played an essential role in creating a legacy of large-scale segregation. Inner-city neighborhoods were losing population to the suburbs, and those excluded from buying into this new realm were left to contend with deteriorating buildings in older neighborhoods, accelerated by discriminatory lending practices such as redlining.

As demand for better highway access to downtown increased, civic leaders supplemented federal highway funds with federal urban renewal funding to disproportionately target and clear land in Black communities, barrios, Chinatowns and lower-income communities to make way for access ramps and bypass routes (Brown 2005, Mohl, 2012). Indigenous lands throughout the U.S. were annexed or cut through with easements for highway development. As highway development progressed and miles increased, other forms of public and private transportation decreased. Streetcar tracks and passenger rail were deemed unnecessary with the advancement of automobile access. But access was (and is) unequal, and the loss of options further impacted disadvantaged communities, many of whom were displaced to outlying communities by highway development and suffered the cost of longer auto-centric commutes.

Opposition to highway development emerged in the 1960s as grassroots citizen organizations decried the negative externalities of displacement or proximity to the noise and pollution of highway traffic (Mohl and Rose, 2012). But these revolts brought disparate results across cities. Often the victories went to white middle- and higher-income communities, excluding urban BIPOC and lower-come communities who continued to withstand the worst of highway construction. As the interstate highway system neared completion in the 1970s, an estimated 475,000 households and roughly 1 million people were displaced across the U.S. Policy changes to redress the impacts from this period of development were slow in forming. In 1973, the Federal-Aid Highway Act made the Highway Trust Fund available to finance transit and active transportation services to better serve communities with limited access to automobile transportation. Transportation decision-making reorganized as well. In many states, metropolitan planning organizations were formed to advocate collaboration between transit and transportation agencies, and other levels of local and state government. Consideration of a host of transportation options increased representation for diversity of interest groups, leading to more collaborative light rail, bus rapid transit and commuter rail systems.

But this work has fallen short in directly remedying the racial and class disparities and impacts represented by the existing transportation infrastructure embedded in communities across the U.S. In some cases, the added transportation options have fostered further displacement in previously impacted communities. Renewed interest in inner-city neighborhoods in the late 1970s introduced cost

pressures on many remaining BIPOC and lower-income urban households, many of whom were and remain renters (Smith, 1996). Targeted government-funded revitalization efforts increased this pressure starting in the late 1980s, spurring demand from an influx of higher-income households that has fostered speculation. The resulting higher property values and rents exist in tandem with policies emphasizing investments in mass transit. So, while the Intermodal Surface and Efficiency Act of 1991 prompted a change toward higher-density urban development, the introduction of transit has also increased gentrification pressures Mohl and Rose 2012).

In sum, a long history of transportation decision-making — aimed to benefit the greater good — both traumatized and underinvested in certain communities and income groups. Today, many recognize this history and demand policies that explicitly consider equity and justice in transportation planning and development. At the heart of this recognition is the enactment of improved engagement with the communities directly and tangentially impacted by new or expanded infrastructure, and arts and culture are playing a role in opening the dialogue between institutions and these underrepresented communities.

2.2 ARTS, CULTURE AND THE CITY

Art has long been intertwined with urban development and public infrastructure projects (VanderSchaaf and Kayzar, 2021). Art has been employed to improve the look of transportation infrastructure as well, especially in transit projects. Current trends in art and transportation have advanced, however, to represent a more complex and dynamic mix of actions and activity by a host of unique regional and local public, private and philanthropic partners. New concepts stretch the intent from beautification to placemaking. Today it is common to see art populating areas surrounding transportation projects, aimed at engaging and mitigating the impacts for a broader community. And rather than enrolling artists solely to produce a product — public art — organizations and agencies often engage artists throughout the process of planning and implementation. Artists and culture bearers are enrolled to work with agency staff to develop deeper cultural understandings of served or impacted communities and to present ways to improve community engagement practices around projects. Artists co-facilitate pop-up events with transportation planners, and work as interpreters and translators to increase and improve community input opportunities. Their work throughout the planning process helps agencies to recognize and acknowledge community identity and sense of place.

We can trace the progression of art and culture's role in the planning and development of places throughout history, progressing from a product to a process — from art as "object-making" to art as creative placemaking. What follows is a reflection on the role visual representation has played in city building, in disseminating ideas about shared cultural and historical identity, and in acting as a conduit for the political: the voice of the citizen. So,

> while permanent artworks remain the lasting and most visible outcome of modern arts and culture efforts, today's public art – the murals, mosaics and sculptures – represent only a portion of the "heavy lifting" artists and culture bearers do to benefit planning and development outcomes.

2.3 CITY-BUILDING AND THE ARTS

In the ad-hoc chaos of early U.S. city-building, space was found for public art funded by industrialists and builders. To promote the culture of their cities, industrialists also funded museums, symphonies and theaters. These early civic leaders believed arts and culture offered unique and necessary opportunities for expression and cultural exchange that would attract investors and residents and create an identity for the city. The concept of fostering an identity through the arts remained integral to the City Beautiful movement's ideology, which imprinted ornate monumental buildings and statuary into the landscapes of many cities into the 1930s. That same decade, the 1935 federal Works Progress Administration (WPA) sought a cohesive national narrative, and to achieve this, it embedded artists into the workforce of major infrastructure projects. The ethos of arts as integral to city life was maintained well into the 1980s through "percent for art" programs and federally funded National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) awards that cities drew on to support public arts and arts organizations. By the 1980s, however, the role of arts and culture was being reevaluated. Seeing how artists and creatives could transform declining landscapes and attract investors, city leadership recruited them in their revitalization efforts. Enthusiasm for creative cities in the 1990s and 2000s led to a proliferation of arts districts, gallery crawls and live-work lofts.

While many efforts to engage arts and culture in development and planning practices were driven by commercial elites, planners, civic leaders and federal programs, arts and cultural tools have also been utilized by underrepresented communities themselves, especially in their effort to gain a voice in institutional decision-making. For example, after decades of grand-scale demolition in U.S. downtowns and inner-city neighborhoods in the 1950s and 60s, community members rallied under the banner of cultural preservation to initiate urban preservation programs. And while cities were often guided by a primarily Eurocentric arts doctrine, some public art works were being reshaped by grassroots community-based arts movements toward a reengagement with muted voices.

2.4 ART, CULTURE, INJUSTICE AND ENGAGEMENT

In the 1970s, murals were the centerpiece of the Chicano Movement, which sought recognition for the politically and culturally isolated Latinx population in the U.S. Chicano activists saw representation in murals as a "powerful means by which to disseminate ideas about shared common cultural and historical roots." (Latorre, 2008). Their murals were a rallying cry against discrimination and an inequitable social system, but they were also aimed at educating others about Latinx culture to overcome unfair stereotypes. Similarly, the Wall of Respect, painted by a group of Black artists in 1967 on a building slated for removal through eminent domain, offered images of successful Black Americans for the consideration of white commuters driving into Chicago from the suburbs.

Artists and culture bearers from the community joined and sometimes led community organizations. The activist art they produced was not sanctioned by or connected to the work of civic institutions. But planners began in the 1970s to see the work of these artists as appropriate forms of expression and started to dismantle the government's top-town expert approach by collaborating with artists and community organizations. Cities like Philadelphia instituted a mural arts program, and Los Angeles

embarked on a city-wide mural effort. Following the 2008 recession, the Obama administration advocated localized place-based federal relief programs because of the unevenness of the downturn's impacts. For the arts, this cemented the move from being an integral part of community-based practices to playing a role in policy and planning decisions. A new template for institutional and community relations, now commonly referred to as creative placemaking, was emerging. And the template was broadening the ways arts and culture could be reimagined and employed as an asset, both institutionally and within communities.

> *"The term creative placemaking describes efforts to integrate art into a range of community planning and development efforts, from economic development to the environment, housing, transportation, and community and public safety."* (Urban Institute, 2018)

At a national summit in 1991, the decades of work to integrate the arts into infrastructure policymaking and planning decisions coincided with decades of work to grant inclusion of the urban built landscape into the jurisdiction of the Environmental Protection Agency (Pulido, 2000). Parallel inclusion for the arts and urban environmental activists was significant progress, since it simultaneously expanded opportunities to engage communities around issues and concerns, especially for previously underrepresented groups. Within a few years of urban inclusion, the U.S Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) issued Executive Order 12898, which makes addressing "disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects" from government programs, policies and activities a responsibility shared by all branches of the federal government, and this responsibility is shared with each state (EPA, 1994). The equity work of environmental justice, which aims to mitigate adverse impacts and emphasizes full and fair participation for impacted communities when integrated into all aspects of economic and infrastructure development, necessitates the types of engagement and tools conceptualized in creative placemaking.

In 2010, creative placemaking was proffered as a federal agency solution to many U.S. community issues through the NEA's Our Town and ArtPlace America initiatives. Over $21 million was invested in creative placemaking projects in communities throughout the U.S. As a result, the concept and even the wording "strategically enrolling the arts in economic development priorities" became part of the lexicon of many municipal planning departments (VanderSchaaf and Kayzar, 2021). The NEA's conceptualization of creative placemaking invites community artists and arts organizations to be lead partners with funders and municipalities in economic development and infrastructure project conversations. Artists and arts organizations strategically engage as translators, cultural ambassadors, negotiators and trust builders, seeking to establish durable relationships between community members, businesses, neighborhood organizations and institutions. They offer the skills to facilitate discussions and broker understanding, build authentic narratives representing the lived experience of people and place, provide deeper insight into issues and concerns, and offer a better cultural understanding so tools can be modified to form better solutions.

In sum, all development takes place within the greater context of ever-evolving city, regional and national planning; economic development; and private property exchange directives and expectations.

The evolution in the way the arts have been and are included in development processes is born of a complicated history and relationship between the need for buildings and infrastructure and the specific places within the city and region that will be impacted by the projects. Creative placemaking has been called on to give voice to serious issues of inequity and social injustice that will require sustained and long-term efforts at redress.

CHAPTER 3: CASE STUDIES

3.1 ATLANTA REGIONAL COMMISSION: ATLANTA, GEORGIA

3.1.1 Introduction

By internally and intentionally incorporating arts, culture and creative placemaking into many aspects of its work, the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) — though not a direct example of state DOT — has become a leader in the field. ARC's policies and practices provide an excellent template for all governmental agencies.

ARC was established by the Georgia Planning Act to help local governments with planning for transit and transportation, water resources, workforce development, homeland security, and community health and wellness (ARC 2022). It covers 20 counties in Georgia and collaborates with the Atlanta Transit Link Authority and Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) to develop long-range transit and transportation plans (VanderSchaaf and Kayzar 2021, Thakore and Stevens 2023).

ARC absorbed the Metro Atlanta Arts and Culture Coalition (MAACC) in 2011 to create a staffed arts and cultural focus area, and in 2019 developed a 92-page internal guide, which recommends creating "how-to" kits so that local municipalities can better engage with arts, culture and creative placemaking (VanderSchaaf and Kayzar 2021, Liou 2022). The guide also encourages municipalities and organizations to call on ARC to be a cultural convener and offer demonstrations of best practices. This internal strategic plan strongly influences the work of the Metropolitan Transit Plan (MTP), guiding ARC leadership and staff to better engage with arts and culture and become leaders in utilizing creative placemaking as a tool in integrating arts culture, and creative placemaking into the planning, design, and other areas of transit-related or transportation-adjacent planning and implementation.

Under the Community Development division umbrella, ARC runs many programs, policies and initiatives that aim to improve quality of life by emphasizing preserving culture, including public art, and enacting creative placemaking practices (ARC 2022). For example, the Livable Communities Initiative (LCI) makes grants of $150,000 to $400,000 to local jurisdictions to study and reenvision their communities. Arts is often merged with specific transportation projects under LCI in studies that assess and holistically address how infrastructure impacts communities (Thakore and Stevens 2023). There is also the Community Development Assistance program (CDA), under which staff support is provided toward community efforts to program arts and culture into quality-of-life improvements to transportation-related infrastructure such as sidewalks and intersections, enabling local communities and organizations to take part in mitigating impacts and affirming community identity.

3.1.2 Background

Figure 3.1 Public art mural on shared roadway and rail bridge, courtesy of the Atlanta Regional Council.

Our research focuses on the Arts Leaders of Metro Atlanta (ALMA) program, which was rebranded in 2023 as Culture and Community Design. ALMA was an evolving legacy program from the former MAACC that convened metro Atlanta arts administrators to learn about innovative ideas and projects from the local to the national level (Liou 2022). ARC has been a leader in the arts and culture realm, encouraging collaborative creative placemaking practices in the region and partnering with local jurisdictions and organizations to incorporate art and culture into many of its directed projects. Yet their work had been weakened largely due to "the perceived legal limitations of using federal transportation funding for arts and culture", according to former director of the ALMA program Marion Liou (Liou 2022). Yet the art and cultural aspects of ARC's transportation plans typically focused on community engagement to understand community needs and mitigate infrastructure impacts. Specifically, ARC sought to "collaborate with communities that planning has historically and systematically excluded and often harmed" (ARC 2021). Therefore, Liou's division pivoted to a clearer focus that aligns arts and culture with community engagement.

Figure 3.2 ALMA program participants, courtesy of the Atlanta Regional Council.

3.1.3 Findings

3.1.3.1 Organizational structure/context

Historically, ARC has interacted with arts and cultural organizations, artists, and culture bearers through the economic development program (LCI), the technical assistance program (CDA) and the former ALMA convenings. While LCI and CDA are project-specific, and the organizations and creatives were enrolled by local civic leaders, these interactions enabled ARC staff to become familiar with their work, which raised awareness about the embeddedness and value of arts and cultural organizations and creatives to their respective communities.

Figure 3.3 ALMA program workshop, courtesy of the Atlanta Regional Council.

Seeking to further develop and empower these community leaders and give them the tools they need to engage their communities in collaborative work with government institutions, ARC piloted a new approach in 2021 and 2022 under ALMA. The pilot brought together the organizations and artists and culture bearers with planners, designers, city leaders and staff to collaborate and design inclusive and equitable projects. Through the project work, the organizations learned how to center creatives as active partners in community planning and engagement initiatives.

In 2021, ARC conducted a survey to identify and create a directory of local artists interested in civic work (ARC 2021). They incorporated existing ARC initiatives and objectives, such as sidewalk safety and enlivening downtown alleys, as group projects to demonstrate what is possible when artists and creatives are enrolled in the planning process. They developed an “arts in planning” handbook that emphasizes and prioritizes lived experience, creative involvement and learning by (un)doing, and invited community-based organizations from underrepresented counties and demographics in the region to a forum to brainstorm project ideas. The outcomes of this work helped reshape ARC’s existing programming.

In 2022, ARC selected a cohort of community and arts and cultural organizations, artists, and culture bearers to participate on teams with local officials and planning and design professionals, gathering for monthly sessions and activities focused on learning about how arts and culture can be used in the planning and community engagement process. Professional development was also part of the program. Organizations and artists developed the skills and tools necessary to become community leaders, mediating between their communities, area artists and institutions such as ARC and local municipalities. According to the evaluation report for the 2022 ALMA cohort (ARC 2022), the learning objectives for the reenvisioned program included:

- For organizations: learning how to utilize arts and culture, including artists from their own community, to participate in and lead community planning and engagement efforts
- For working artists: learning how to collaborate effectively with diverse community members from different backgrounds, and problem-solve in unique and holistic ways
- For all participants: learning to engage historically excluded and marginalized community members by using creative arts and cultural strategies and intentionally co-designing projects within the context of community circumstances, needs and desires

Additionally, organizations and artists were expected to develop strong relationships with institutional planners and the other practitioners they met in the sessions and through the project teams.

In 2023, ARC retired the ALMA name and reintroduced their new approach as the Culture and Community Design program (C&CD). Through C&CD, ARC seeks to gain a pool of trained and effective partner organizations and artist and culture bearers that they can call upon when doing outreach and engagement for planned transportation and other projects.

Today the C&CD program within Community Development at ARC has three staff members dedicated to integrating arts, culture and creative placemaking practices into the way community development work is done internally at ARC (Thakore and Stevens 2023). Current director, Roshani Thakore, also oversees the Cultural Forums program, which convenes local leaders with arts and cultural leaders from outside the region in discussions that are open to the public on topics such as arts and prosperity, creative placemaking, and arts and aging.

3.1.3.2 Project partners

For the 2021 ALMA pilot, ARC convened 10 community-based organizations for the brainstorming forum.

In 2022 ARC selected three community and arts and cultural organizations and 10 artists to participate in the collaborative project design cohort, and invited a New York City–based community engagement artist, Oakland's arts and cultural director, a national creative placemaking consultant, the Fulton County Arts & Culture director, the project manager for Midtown Alliance, and a representative from the Atlanta History Center to provide insight into their arts and cultural and creative placemaking practices.

Additionally, 2022's teams were staffed by nine local designers, organizations and city staff who volunteered their time, and eleven design students who paid $700 in tuition to participate in the program.

3.1.3.3 Financing

A large share of ARC's programming is funded by federal transportation dollars, which are funneled through GDOT (Thakore and Stevens 2023).

The budget for ALMA's 2022 pilot program totaled $18,467 but generated tuition revenue from participating design students.

Table 3.1 Financing: Atlanta Regional Commission (Atlanta, Georgia)

Organization Stipends	**$7,500**
Artist Stipends	**$5,000**
Speakers	**$2,685**
Meals/Venues	**$3,282**
Tuition Income	**-$7,700**

3.1.3.4 Timeline

ALMA has been an evolving program since 2011, when arts and culture became a staffed effort at ARC. After introducing an overarching arts, culture and creative placemaking strategic plan in 2019, ARC piloted a more immersive program in 2021 and 2022 for community organizations serving underrepresented geographies and demographics — a collaboration among local officials, planners, designers, artists and culture bearers to learn ways of incorporating arts and culture into solutions for real-world local issues. In 2023, this new format, aimed at equipping community organizations, artists and culture bearers with the tools to better engage and represent their communities in infrastructure-planning discussions with institutions, was reintroduced as the Culture and Community Design Program.

3.1.3.5 Process

Six years after staffing an arts and culture position, ARC began the process of creating a strategic plan (ARC 2019). Assessing the success of the agency's arts, culture and creative placemaking efforts to-date, ARC recognized the transformative role arts and culture play in addressing issues related to the health of the region and equitable outcomes. In developing a cohesive strategy to relate this work to ARC's overall mission and values, ARC engaged leaders from local municipalities, arts nonprofits and universities to guide their five-year vision for making arts and culture an essential element in the agency's practices. The strategic planning goals are to:

- Support and preserve the identity and diverse cultural practices and traditions across the region
- Advocate for artists, creatives and organizations to have a voice in business and civic planning and decision-making
- Lead in promoting the use of arts, culture and creative placemaking in planning across disciplines and municipalities

- Incorporate arts and culture into the work and day-to-day operations at ARC, and grow knowledge of the value of arts and culture in the region
- Encourage a collaborative and inclusive ecosystem of arts, culture and creative placemaking in the region

Figure 3.4 ALMA program participants, courtesy of the Atlanta Regional Council

In the main, arts and culture would drive community input and partnerships in stakeholder engagement, with ARC acting as initiator, convenor, guide and demonstrator of these practices. The ALMA program would provide the space for ARC to advocate, demonstrate and grow knowledge of best arts, culture and creative placemaking practices. ARC designed tool kits for use by municipalities, organizations and businesses and convened national leaders in the field to discuss ideas and practices. The program evolved to a more interactive approach, eventually linking real-world local issues to demonstrations of the role arts, culture and creative placemaking practices play and how they can be incorporated. Further, to "nurture a network of arts spokespersons and champions," ARC piloted what became the Culture and Community Design program under ALMA in 2021 and 2022.

In the 2022 ALMA pilot, ARC staff organized two online sessions and three in-person sessions for three participating community organizations and 10 artists and culture bearers (ARC 2022, Liou 2022). ARC chose to invite participants for the new cohort, selecting candidates from groups who engaged in certain aspects of the 2021 ALMA pilot to increase the diversity of ALMA program participants and better reflect the demographics of the region.

Session themes included undoing or unlearning past practices, framing the role of arts and culture in planning, establishing expectations for collaboration, achieving a mutual vision, storytelling and lived experience, prioritizing community identity through creative involvement, and putting projects into practice (ARC 2022). In addition to attending learning sessions, the cohort formed three teams consisting of an organization, artists, culture bearers, local civic and design professionals, and design students participating under a tuitional program. The entire cohort and all team members did site visits at the three participating organizations and focused on a transportation-related issue that needed resolution.

For this study we interviewed two participating organizations, Alif Institute and Ballethnic Dance Company. Alif Institute is a 20-year-old nonprofit Arab cultural center that seeks to educate, build bridges, and eliminate stereotypes through the teaching of Arab languages, traditional music, country arts and youth social programming (Abdulhamid 2023). The Institute hoped to collaborate with GDOT on a bike and walking path, the Peachtree Creek Greenway, which will adjoin their property. Ballethnic

Dance Company is a 33-year-old organization offering black and brown dancers an inclusive space to learn and practice ballet and African Dance (Gilreath 2023). The dance company sought to improve their visibility and connection to the MARTA station located 10 blocks from their building. Over the course of eight months and with the guidance of ARC staff, the organization's representative attended sessions, did readings and homework to gain knowledge about the creative placemaking process and community engagement, and collaborated with their team to problem-solve their transportation-related issues using arts and cultural practices. In closing the sessions, each team presented their solutions to all members of the cohort and ARC staff, and the volunteer professionals recommended resources and next steps.

3.1.3.6 Outcome

Alif Institute gained a schematic for the design of a flexible space at the end of their sidewalk that would physically connect their building to the greenway, increasing their exposure to passersby and enabling them to share Arab culture through a small platform for musicians, a weekend market or art exhibits (Abdulhamid 2023). The institute is in peripheral Atlanta in an industrial area between the towns of Chamblee and Tucker. They are the only Arab cultural organization in the Southeast and are undergoing a renovation and expansion of their 1960s industrial building and programming. They want to increase outreach to the diversity of Arab cultural groups in the region and to a wider audience of people who want to learn about Arab cultures.

Their location on 10 acres limits their visibility, and the greenway seemed a good opportunity to improve connectivity (Abdulhamid 2023). They began attending GDOT meetings about the greenway in Atlanta and nearby Chamblee and Tucker four or five years ago. The meetings provided project updates, but there was limited opportunity for stakeholder input. The institute has offered to gift land at the edge of their property to GDOT so the path can parallel their building, but it is unclear if their offer is under consideration or even if the greenway will materialize as proposed. For the institute, interacting with the cities and GDOT has been daunting, but the experience with the ALMA program has "moved the curtain aside" and provided some transparency about how government agencies work. In addition to learning more about the planning process, the institute networked with a host of organizations, local officials, city administrators, design professionals and artists and now feels more confident they could influence outcomes with the greenway.

Finally, collaborating on the design of the flexible space schematic was enlightening and empowering. The schematic is a creative tool the institute can call on to help local leaders understand and advocate for the institute's vision. And the process of collaboration brought them "out of their own little bubble." The diverse team of designers, city representatives, artists and other organizations brought their own experiences and perspectives to the solution. As part of the process, the institute learned about their team's work and diverse ideas about community engagement, and it was empowering for an Arab cultural organization to have a seat at the table and feel seen and heard.

Ballethnic gained several new arts-infused solutions for their connectivity problem, as well as validation regarding some of their own creative ideas (Gilreath 2023). The dance company owns a commercial

building in view of the MARTA station 10 blocks away. Yet there is no clear path or wayfinding for the 100 or more people a week who come to their space. Suggestions for "dancing feet" painted on the sidewalk and a mural to make the building stand out have now been formalized and are something that can be collectively worked toward, supported by connections to the people that can help Ballethnic implement the solutions. This includes a connection to Aerotropolis Atlanta, an economic development organization that convenes industry and thought leaders around improving the vitality of the area surrounding the airport (Aerotropolis 2023). ARC helped bring Ballethnic's conversation with Aerotropolis into focus (Gilreath 2023).

Figure 3.5 ALMA program participants, courtesy of the Atlanta Regional Council.

For Ballethnic, learning to "speak in the language necessary about issues that are important to us" (Gilreath 2023) is another ALMA program benefit. For both the Alif Institute and Ballethnic, being treated like a stakeholder, on the same level as commercial or business interests, has not been the norm (Abdulhamid 2023, Gilreath 2023). Both organizations have long legacies — longer than many businesses — and historically, each has introduced audiences to nearby restaurants and shops throughout that time. Yet this goodwill has not resulted in inclusion when planning and economic development issues are being discussed, despite the diversity of (creative) experiences and demographics each organization represents. For both organizations, expectations for the program were low. Yet both organizations stated their outcome far exceeded expectations, so they plan to be partners in engagement with ARC in the future.

> *"It taught me to enter with no expectations, listen, and value the process as much as the outcome."* (Abdulhamid 2023)

In 2021, ARC created a directory of 64 working artists who are experienced and interested in civic work, as well as a list of arts and cultural and community organizations in the region. But the outcomes of the two ALMA pilots resulted in much more than this "potential partner" inventory. ARC's program has equipped Alif Institute and Ballethnic Dance Company, and other organizations like them, with the tools and experience necessary to partner on projects that will make arts, culture and creative placemaking essential to the planning process. Further, the leaders of these organizations have expressed their desire to be leaders in the engagement of their communities, achieving ARC's goal of inclusive and equitable outreach and engagement.

3.1.3.7 Takeaways

The new director of the Culture and Community Design program at ARC notes that traditional ways of institutional engagement, like open houses, sometimes work but not often for underserved populations, and art has been an afterthought in most transportation planning and programming (Thakore and Stevens 2023). She refers to ARC's engagement of arts and culture and the creative sector in the process of planning for transportation a "deeply intentional strategy." As demonstrated by the agency's commitment to an arts, culture and creative placemaking planning strategy, and community development programming,

> a large institution can think and act more holistically regarding the consideration of community identity and practices of engagement, and arts and culture are cornerstones of these improved engagement practices.

- ARC's arts, culture and creative placemaking strategy represents not only an understanding of the value of creative practices and a commitment to the inclusion of arts and culture in the agency's internal practices, but it also establishes a commitment to being a leader in the region in helping other institutions and organizations do the same.
- Offering clear guideposts for how to incorporate arts and cultural practices internally, the strategic plan enables the establishment of programming throughout ARC in support of this work.
- The commitment to leadership encourages ARC to equip potential partners in the region with the tools needed to understand, advocate for and incorporate creative practices in their work.
- Equipped potential partners appreciate the knowledge and transparency, gain trust in the institution, and will therefore seek to engage their communities.
- ARC's continuing work in this area demonstrates the value to institutions in recognizing embeddedness of arts and cultural organizations and artists and culture bearers to their respective communities, and their ability to engage and collaboratively and creatively problem-solve and envision community improvement.

ARC's process of incorporating arts, culture and creative placemaking into all aspects of its work provides a template for other agencies interested in thinking more holistically about design and implementation impacts, and most important, engagement with impacted communities.

3.2 EL PASO STREETCAR: EL PASO, TEXAS

3.2.1 Introduction

This artist-led project involved imagining the return of the streetcars to El Paso after their decades-long absence. An artwork that was half performance, half public posters caught enough public attention that the artist was able to mount a successful petition campaign to have streetcar service restored. State funding and the creation of a new layer of transit government were necessary to make the project happen, including the restoration of the 1950s streetcars themselves. New uses of the streetcars include architecture tours and mobile concerts, which could be viewed as a further creative use of the transportation space but also indicate a lower-than-desirable level of ridership.

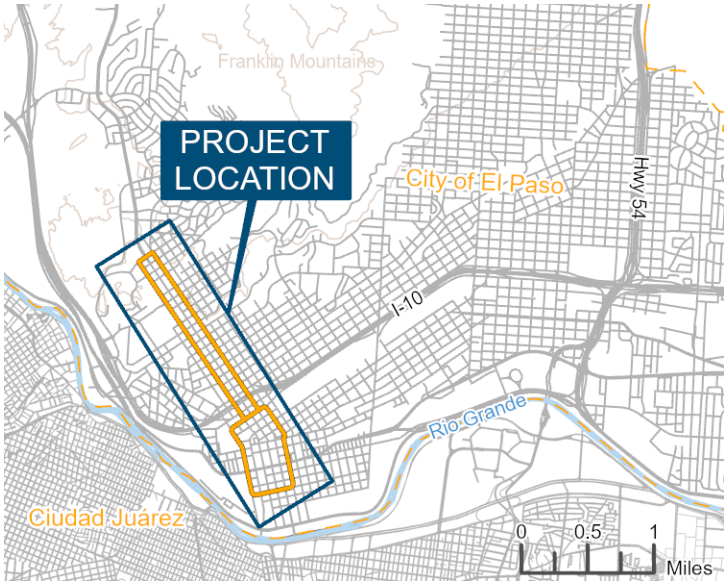

Figure 3.6 Project location detail map: El Paso streetcar (El Paso, Texas)

3.2.2 Background

The El Paso streetcars originally ran from 1881 to 1974. They began as four privately owned companies that built their own international toll bridges to run cross-border routes. The lines were consolidated into the El Paso Electric Railway Company in 1901, reaching peak ridership in 1920 with 19 million passengers. In 1943, the renamed El Paso Electric Company sold the streetcar lines to National City Lines (NCL, owned by Standard Oil), who removed all but the cross-border line, which they retained to fulfill a service contract with the city of Juárez. NCL later bought new cars in the 1950s, which became emblematic of the line. In 1973, international service ended when Juárez removed the tracks on their side of the border because merchants feared they were losing business to El Paso, and the streetcar was completely shut down the following year.

Replacing and enhancing streetcar service was a priority even before it was shut down. Feasibility studies were conducted in 1967, 1979, 1981, 1988, 1993, 1994, 1995, 2004, 2008 and 2010 for various replacement services, but nothing ever happened. What did happen in 2010 was Peter Svarzbein beginning his MFA thesis project at the School for Visual Arts in New York. Svarzbein grew up in El Paso and was interested in the streetcar's previous function of connecting El Paso and Ciudad Juárez across the increasingly hardened border. He developed a project that he called "part performance art, part guerrilla marketing, part visual art installation, and part fake advertising campaign" as "a love letter to the city that raised me and my region" (Smart Growth America). This project included posters in the two

downtowns advertising the return of streetcar service, including slogans such as “Let us take you home on either side of the border” and “Here to make the border safe again.” The performance art came via a spokesperson, Alex the Trolley Conductor, who appeared at public events to tout the “return” of the streetcar.

Figure 3.7 Posters of “Alex the Trolley Conductor” in El Paso, courtesy of El Paso Transnational Trolley Project

The public received Svarzbein’s project very well, and interest grew in reviving the transit service. While working on the project, he had heard that the original 1950s streetcars were still in storage but were about to be sold off by the city. He started a petition to save the streetcars, which turned into a campaign to reintroduce service. By 2012, one final study was produced, and the streetcar was on its way to implementation. In 2014, TxDOT approved $97 million for the Camino Real Regional Mobility Authority, and service officially resumed in 2018. Svarzbein ran for city council in 2015 on the strength of the streetcar project, and he has since been reelected. The two loops of streetcar lines today — using restored and upgraded 1950s cars — have been supplemented by multiple BRT lines, and there are plans to add a streetcar line to the medical center and another across the border to finally restore El Paso-Ciudad Juárez service.

3.2.3 Findings

3.2.3.1 Organizational structure/context

Within Texas, Regional Mobility Authorities were first authorized in 2001 as a new kind of local government agency. RMAs can provide mobility improvements via financing, design, construction, operations and maintenance in any mode (road, air, water, pedestrian/cycling, freight or transit),

although project planning remains under the respective municipal planning organization's (MPO's) jurisdiction. They can contract with local, state and national governments of the U.S. and Mexico and can work on projects that extend outside the state or outside the country. They have the authority to issue bonds, seek funding from other levels of government, and collect tolls or fares — but they cannot collect taxes.

In El Paso, the Camino Real RMA (CRRM) was created in 2007 for the region. Unlike other RMAs, and despite the "regional" name, its borders are coterminous with the city of El Paso. However, CRRM can operate within El Paso County, as well as into New Mexico or Mexico should the need arise.

Sun Metro is the transit department for the city of El Paso, which operates the streetcars.

3.2.3.2 Project partners

Peter Svarzbein (MFA student), TxDOT, city of El Paso, Camino Real Regional Mobility Authority (created for the project), El Paso Water

3.2.3.3 Financing

There was no federal funding involved, only state, which is unusual for a new transit project. TxDOT provided $95 million for the project, and the city of El Paso and El Paso Water each contributed $5 million. A Federal Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement program grant was awarded in 2018 to help with operations costs.

3.2.3.4 Timeline

Table 3.2 Timeline: El Paso streetcar (El Paso, Texas)

1974	The last El Paso streetcar line ends
2010	Peter Svarzbein develops the art/performance project of Alex the Trolley Conductor, with posters advertising the "return" of the streetcar
2011	Svarzbein starts a petition to restore the 1950s streetcars, which have been in outdoor storage
2014	TxDOT approves $97 million for the Camino Real Regional Mobility Authority
2018	Streetcar service resumes

3.2.3.5 Process

This is our only example of art leading the entire transportation project. Without the MFA thesis of Svarzbein, which was more a performance piece than it was a physical art object, it is likely that the El Paso streetcar never would have been restored. Svarzbein's project tapped into the sense of pride that residents of El Paso had about being a border region, especially in contrast to the increasing rhetoric about the danger of the border and the need to harden it. The physical connectivity that the streetcars

used to provide across the international border was valuable in residents' memories, and Svarzbein tapped into that value as a lifelong resident himself.

Beyond the art, however, it took the availability of the original streetcars and the desire to restore them to make the project successful. The physical appearance of some of the original 1950s-era cars allowed their renovators to match the memories of older residents and was a key part of restoring service on at least one of the old lines.

Figure 3.8 The El Paso Streetcar rolls through downtown, courtesy of El Paso Times

3.2.3.6 Outcome

Today, Sun Metro advertises events on the streetcars: Trolley Tracks, a free concert series within the streetcar on weekend evenings; Read and Ride, in conjunction with the public library; and history or art tours around downtown. These events suggest that ridership has not been very high, if there is room for recreation events on the streetcars themselves. Further, ridership reductions caused by the pandemic and immigration crisis leave the future of the streetcar in some doubt at this point.

In large part, the restoration of the El Paso streetcars was a fortuitous coming together of one person's master's thesis project, a desert climate that meant 50-year-old vehicles were still usable, and the general trend in the 2000s/2010s of streetcar revivals across the U.S. But it also reflects the importance of understanding the local meanings that specific types of transportation have and working with the public through those meanings. Svarzbein's project succeeded because it brought together the cultural

and social connectivity meanings of the streetcar with the physical infrastructure of the vehicles, an important lesson for any mode.

Figure 3.9 Svarzbein's project covering a building, courtesy of Peter Svarzbein

3.2.3.7 Takeaways

- Understanding local meanings and values regarding mobility, connectivity, identity and nostalgia were all key to garnering public support for this project.
- As an artist-led project, the El Paso Streetcar demonstrates the importance of letting artists have free rein to develop the type of artwork they want, including how and when to engage the public.
- The institutionalization of the Camino Real Regional Mobility Authority has had other benefits, including adding capacity to Interstate 10, improving traffic flow around the region's main port of entry from Mexico, and developing an app to reduce traffic congestion by sending drivers on less congested routes in a more dispersed manner.

3.3 DETOUR SIGNS: GRAND MARAIS, MN

3.3.1 Introduction

The Highway 61 corridor along the North Shore Scenic Drive connects the communities of northeastern Minnesota. It is the most important infrastructure for the city of Grand Marais. Cognizant of the importance of this corridor to their town, Grand Marais locals were interested in improving safety by means of redesigning the highway to include pedestrian and bicycling infrastructure. After receiving funding from the Blue Cross Blue Shield tobacco settlement, city officials and residents began a visioning process centered on improving the streetscape of Highway 61 in the city's downtown. The success of the community engagement process, coupled by financial support from the Transportation Alternatives Program in 2015, made it so MnDOT caught wind of the corridor redesign project. As the city sought to continue exploring potential uses of art embedded in infrastructure projects, members of the Creative Economy Collaborative, the arts advisory board to the city of Grand Marais, received a regional grant to create artwork placed on the road detours to bring lighthearted curiosity during the initial phase of the highway reconstruction. With the support of the creative placemaking projects done during the engagement conducted by Moving Matters, the city of Grand Marais had the interest and capacity to create a small-scale yet impactful use of arts in infrastructure during the detours caused by construction.

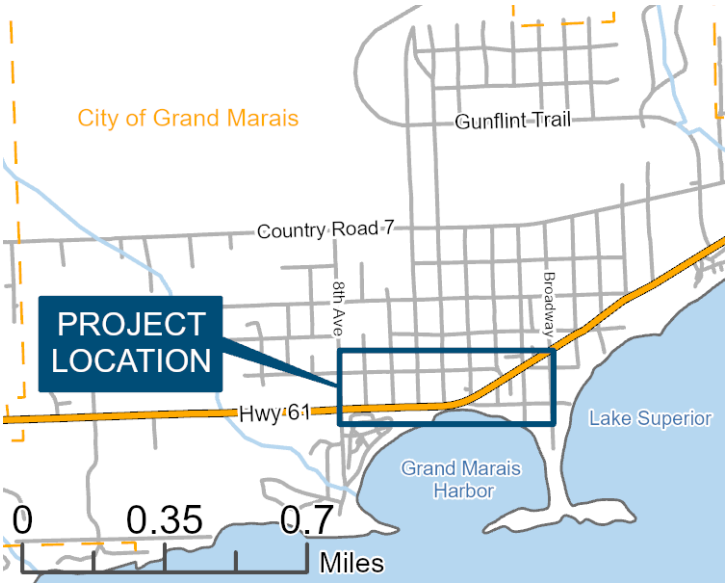

Figure 3.10 Project location detail map: Detour signs (Grand Marais, Minnesota)

3.3.2 Background

The visioning of the redesign of Highway 61 began in 2013 when the Sawtooth Mountain Clinic received funding from the Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota Active Living for All initiative. The Sawtooth Mountain Clinic founded Moving Matters, a placemaking initiative across the county aimed toward improving pedestrian and cycling access and safety. Over the course of its run, Moving Matters led robust community engagement efforts that placed the community's vision at the heart of the redesign of Highway 61. Starting in 2014, Moving Matters collaborated with city officials and contractors in engaging county residents on their ideas of what Highway 61 could look like. The community met during three meetings, and Moving Matters maintained interest through creative engagement strategies including improvisational theater on community issues, walkability and health. These engagement efforts were accompanied by a health impact assessment published in 2015 that explored the safety and

access concerns of the highway. Together, these initiatives gave the highway reconstruction project a competitive edge and received $600,000 in funding from the Transportation Alternatives Program. The city approved bidding for the project, and the construction was slated to take off in 2020.

Concurrent to the creative engagement done by Moving Matters for the Highway 61 redesign, the city wanted to continue supporting the use of arts and culture as an engagement strategy. Cultural workers from Grand Marais organized as the Creative Economy Collaborative (CEC), a cross-sector group of people who work in support of the creative economy. The CEC began developing a plan to develop the arts and culture in the county. Among its members are government officials, nonprofit arts and culture leaders, for-profit arts and business leaders, and artists and craftspeople. In 2018, the CEC was designated as the Arts Advisory Council to the city of Grand Marais. With this role, the CEC worked closely with the architect assigned by MnDOT to the Highway 61 reconstruction project. One of the CEC's roles during the design phase of the project included advisory on the streetscape elements like bike racks, benches, kiosks, and public art along the corridor. Anticipating the disruptions brought by the highway construction in 2020, the CEC, along with Amanda Lovelee, devised the idea for the detour signs project.

3.3.3 Findings

3.3.3.1 Organizational structure

Efforts to develop the local arts and culture economy in the North Shore community spearheaded the detour signs project. Members of the Creative Economy Collaborative worked in an advisory role with MnDOT project managers in the aesthetics and furnishings of benches, sidewalks, planters and lighting along Highway 61. With this attention to arts during the highway reconstruction project, the city also grew interested in exploring alternative ways to fund a temporary project around the construction disruption.

3.3.3.2 Project partners

Sawtooth Mountain Clinic, Moving Matters project, Cook County Chamber of Commerce, city of Grand Marais, Creative Economy Collaborative, MnDOT

3.3.3.3 Financing

The detour signs project was entirely independent of funding from the MnDOT highway reconstruction. The city of Grand Marais, with assistance from members of the Creative Economy Collaborative and Twin Cities artist Amanda Lovelee, submitted a grant to the Arrowhead Regional Arts Council to fund the detour signs project. The city acted as the fiscal agency handling the grant funds, which were regranted to Lovelee to conduct the detour signs project. Local officials and community members involved in the project mentioned during interviews that this project was used as an experiment to explore potential small-scale art projects to accompany future infrastructure investments.

3.3.3.4 Timeline

2014-2020: HIGHWAY 61 VISIONING, PLANNING AND DESIGN

MnDOT learned of the community-envisioned highway redesign plans and assigned an engineer to get involved in the project. But in the first round of meetings with the city of Grand Marais, the proposal brought forth by MnDOT didn't reflect the original vision of the Highway 61 streetscape. After various rounds of revisions and negotiations between the city and MnDOT, a change in MnDOT staff more receptive to the original community-envisioned designs allowed the project to move forward. MnDOT organized a Highway 61 Steering Committee consisting of key partners across the city to assist in the project design phase. The city of Grand Marais planned for full-depth urban reconstruction and utility work in the highway segment that crosses its downtown. Since Highway 61 is engineered and managed by MnDOT, it was within their purview to complete and construct the community-desired redesign elements that enhanced the streetscape's accessibility and safety. This included a road diet, a new sidewalk and a new shared-use path on the lakeside. The city received a grant to purchase and install street furnishings and amenities like benches, bike racks, waste receptacles, trees, planters and lighting.

2020: CONSTRUCTION, POEMS AND DETOURS

The construction of Highway 61 took off in the Spring of 2020, and with the Arrowhead Regional Arts Council grant, the city hired Amanda Lovelee, who previously worked for seven years as city artist for St. Paul and currently works as a park ambassador for the Metropolitan Council. With her creative partner, Lovelee interviewed Grand Marais residents about detours in their life and captured their mixed feelings concerning the highway improvements. In line with the city's interest in integrating art in new ways across the landscape, Lovelee's intervention focused on using the existing street system as the material and backdrop for residents' own personal detours. She turned residents' stories into poems that were printed on bright pink signposts installed across the routes of the detours. In an interview, the director of the Art Colony in Grand Marais, Ruth Pszwaro, described the project as a scavenger hunt "meant to bring a light-hearted curiosity to the disruption and a surprising gift in a street sign that was actually a story from a local resident."

3.3.3.5 Process

Prior to the detour signs project, Amanda Lovelee visited Grand Marais to speak with members of the Creative Economy Collaborative about their interest in integrating art in new ways in the city. During these discussions, the detours caused by the Highway 61 construction came up, and the city decided to follow through with the signage as an initial project to receive arts grants. Amanda Lovelee's experience in bridging government work and arts, and using signposts as a medium, was crucial in completing the project during the early months of the COVID-19 pandemic. This helped in both her approach toward interviewing residents, identifying the major themes that would become public-facing poems, and managing the logistics of printing them onto signposts. Lovelee reported that flexibility and eagerness to complete the project was essential in installing the signposts, recounting that a public works employee gave of his free time to place them throughout the town.

3.3.3.6 Outcome

The signposts with Lovelee's poems were not intended as permanent fixtures on the county roadways but as temporary as the construction detours. People stopped to read the signs, and they allowed the community to see themselves during the construction period through a playful distraction from the disruption brought by construction. The project allowed the city to acquire capacity in grant writing and in establishing collaborations with artists to develop art within infrastructure projects. This project showed the promise of artists taking on the task of engaging communities impacted by infrastructure developments.

3.3.3.7 Takeaways

- Art and creative engagement can play a mediating role during the construction phase of projects. The detour signs created a playful distraction to the disruptions brought forth by a construction that interrupted Grand Marais' lifeline. The artist captured residents' feelings during the construction, which often do not get considered in infrastructure development. A signpost played with the temporary nature of the project, and it was an inexpensive medium to use.
- While this project used external funding the artist suggests the positive reactions to the signs demonstrates that creative community engagement efforts should be included within the budget for MnDOT projects and artists with project managers need to connect early on.

3.4 MARIPOSA CREEK PARKWAY: MARIPOSA, CALIFORNIA

3.4.1 Introduction

The Mariposa Creek Parkway provides an alternative transportation route for pedestrians and bicyclists in the unincorporated town of Mariposa, located in the rural Sierra foothills near the Arches entrance to Yosemite National Park (Goralnik, 2022). The asphalt pathway parallels the highway and runs along Mariposa Creek, tying together several tourist destinations and offering access to downtown Mariposa. Envisioned by the town in the 1980s, phase one of the parkway was completed in the 1990s, and phase two in the early 2000s. Today the total length of the parkway is .4 miles, but the community hopes it will expand soon to a length of

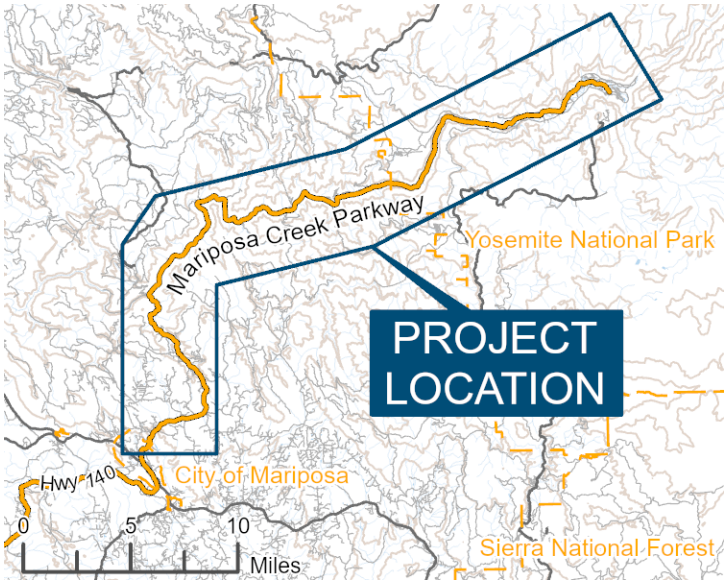

Figure 3.11 Project location detail map: Mariposa Creek Parkway (Mariposa, California)

roughly 4 miles upon completion of planned phases three, four and five. The parkway is envisioned to restore and care for the neglected ephemeral creek ecosystem, encourage healthy transportation habits among an aging population dealing with health concerns such as diabetes, and connect the town of Mariposa with area hiking trails and Yosemite National Park to draw in tourism dollars and provide locals alternative access to the park, aside from the congested highway.

3.4.2 Background

About 20,000 people live in rural Yosemite Valley. The unincorporated town of Mariposa, population 1,700, is the county seat and is sited near one of the year-round entry points to Yosemite National Park along Highway 140 (Goralnik, 2022). Highways 140 and 49 converge for several miles, forming the "main street" of downtown Mariposa. While the town is proximate to the national park, most tourists pass through Mariposa rather than visit. The idea for a parkway along Mariposa Creek was proposed by community members to clean up the watershed and create a reason for tourists to spend some time in the town. It was incorporated into the town plan, and the community was able to fund the first two development phases by the early 2000s. Additionally, the Mariposa Arts Council collaborated with the county's Parks and Recreation division to develop Mariposa County Arts Park along the parkway in the center of downtown, and phase two incorporated a native plant demonstration garden, which is managed by a local Master Gardener group.

Figure 3.12 Mariposa Creek Parkway near downtown Mariposa, courtesy of Yosemite National Park

Today the parkway is well used, and the art park is an active public space hosting exhibits, music, festivals and markets (Goralnik, 2022). For the past two decades, work to expand the parkway failed to advance until it was reintroduced in the county's 2017 economic development plan. County planners sought a Caltrans Sustainable Community Transportation Planning grant, aimed at multi-model transportation enhancement activities, to develop the Mariposa Creek Parkway Master Plan (MCPMP), which was completed and adopted by the Mariposa County Local Transportation Commission in 2019 (WRT, 2019). The plan clarifies the vision for three additional phases that will better connect local institutions and make the parkway an interconnected part of the region's hiking trail system. The expanded parkway will help grow recreation-centered economic development in the county and serve "a range of environmental restoration and enhancement objectives." (ibid). The master plan looks at the entire creek corridor but emphasizes stakeholder desire to prioritize the phase-three segment, which continues from the current terminus.

Work on the MCPMP drew heavily on creative placemaking strategies and practices to engage populations and organizations in the region that did not generally participate in area planning and transportation conversations. This research project highlights those practices and the eventual adoption

of a creative placemaking policy by Mariposa County in 2021, which influences partnered projects with the state DOT, Caltrans.

3.4.3 Findings

3.4.3.1 Organizational structure/context

Regarding the parkway expansion, regional partners have succeeded in moving the vision forward. To date, the county and Sierra Foothill Conservancy secured a California Natural Resource Agency grant to purchase land for phase three. The county, in partnership with Sierra Foothill Conservancy and the Southern Sierra Miwuk Nation, received a Wildlife Conservation Board grant to restore the riparian area, and the county received a $4.4 million Caltrans California Economic Development grant to design, engineer and construct the phase three segment, with completion expected in 2025 (Caltrans, 2022).

Senior Community Design and Development Planner Mikey Goralnik at Mariposa County indicates the recent success of the long-stalled Mariposa Creek Parkway project resulted from the county's ability to engage stakeholders at a deeper level and form important partnerships with diverse organizations (Goralnik, 2022). The tool enabling this engagement was creative placemaking. Incorporating arts and culture into the process expanded outreach to a much broader audience of stakeholders, and the expressed intent to engage the county's stakeholders more intensely regarding this project opened the county to competitive grant opportunities.

3.4.3.2 Project partners

Caltrans, Mariposa County Planning Department, Creative Placemaking Strategic Advisory Committee, Adjacent Property Owners, Advocacy and Equity Focus Group, Built Environment Focus Group, Economic Development Focus Group, Mariposa Arts Council, Smart Growth America, Transportation for America, Sierra Foothill Conservancy, Live Oak Associates, Southern Sierra Miwuk Nation, WRT Design, landscape architects, Sierra Designs, Atlas Lab, Mariposa Parks and Recreation, Mariposa High School

3.4.3.3 Financing

Table 3.3 Financing: Mariposa Creek Parkway (Mariposa, California)

Caltrans Sustainable Community Transportation Grant	**$235,729**
National Endowment for the Arts Our Town Grant	**$100,000** (requires matching funds)
California Natural Resource Agency Grant	**$911,000**
Wildlife Conservation Board Grant	**$415,000**
Caltrans California Economic Development Grant	**$4.4 million**

3.4.3.4 Timeline

Community development of the idea to create a multi-model parkway along the neglected Mariposa Creek took place in the 1980s, and phases one and two were complete by the early 2000s, enhanced by an art park and native planting demonstration garden. Although championed by local leaders, further realization of the parkway was dormant until the county reinvigorated the idea in a 2017 economic development plan and funded a master plan through a grant from Caltrans. Efforts to develop phase three (of five) are underway, with an expected completion of the phase three segment by 2025.

3.4.3.5 Process

While working on an updated regional economic development plan between 2015 and 2017, Mariposa County planners reinvigorated the concept of a parkway along the ephemeral creek in the rural town of Mariposa to connect the community with Yosemite Valley hiking trails and the national park and restore the ecological integrity of the watershed, arguing an expanded multi-model parkway would encourage recreational tourists to spend more time in the town, improve revenues for local businesses and encourage more recreational related development. They further projected parkway development would prompt cleanup of this riparian asset. The county applied for and received a Caltrans grant to launch a feasibility study.

Figure 3.13 Creek Week participants, courtesy of WRT Design.

Figure 3.14 Creek Week participants, courtesy of WRT Design.

County planner Goralnik indicated Caltrans made resources available aimed at partnering on nontechnical schematic-level design and feasibility studies to open opportunities for local agencies and organizations to prioritize smaller-scale transportation improvements within their communities instead of waiting for the DOT to initiate the work as part of their larger-scale and long-range planning. The county uses the resulting studies to pursue implementation funding, and often, Caltrans funds part of the implementation. And in the case of the parkway, the master plan initiated conversations about Caltrans plans to safely connect phase five of the parkway with the highway. Goralnik described the Mariposa Creek Parkway project as a transportation, public art, environmental restoration and economic development project. He intended to cobble together several different types of grants to

achieve implementation by forming partnerships with the different interest groups but needed to demonstrate stakeholder support for each group – requiring broad engagement and outreach.

The county enrolled WRT Design to conduct the outreach and draft the master plan for the parkway. As part of their intensive engagement, in 2018 they hosted a three-day event creekside along the existing parkway (WRT, 2019). The WRT team worked in a temporary village of tents, booths, stations and workshops. At the center of the village was an arts piece called the Gatehouse, where, inside, long-time and new residents, international and American tourists, and local school students were invited to discuss the town and surrounding area and provide feedback on images, site plans, maps, and renderings of the parkway's potential expansion. The highly publicized "Creek Week" brought the conversation to the stakeholders as they exercised on the path or walked their dogs to the coffee shop. But Creek Week also drew people from the entire region to the site by engaging with artists and culture bearers for a series of activities. Themes for the hosted days included Environment + Education, Community + Creativity, and Health + Wellness. In addition to capturing stakeholder input in the Gatehouse, Creek Week partners taught students about ecology, water quality and native plantings, and local native culture bearers explained Native American land management practices. Stakeholders participated in a "Made in Mariposa" art market and street fair; listened to local musicians and a concert by Mariposa High School students; ate from local food trucks in the pop-up beer garden; and attended yoga, Tai-Chi and boot-camp classes. The extended arts and cultural experiences enabled WRT and the county to achieve high participation numbers and survey responses and elevated interest in the parkway project among a variety of stakeholder groups. Enrolling artists and culture bearers also elevated interest from a diverse field of organizations and solidified relationships and partnerships.

Figure 3.15 Mariposa Creek Parkway, courtesy of Smart Growth America

The county's partnerships were also strengthened through participation in 2018's "State of the Art" training session hosted by Smart Growth America (SGA) (SGA and T4A, 2021). SGA invited local artists and culture bearers, community organization leaders, and arts administrators to learn about transportation planning practices while concurrently teaching transportation engineers, planners and staff about artistic practice within the community. Finally, in 2019 Mariposa County planners worked with the Mariposa Arts Council to earn a National Endowment for the Arts Our Town Grant to develop a creative placemaking strategy to encourage future projects to engage stakeholders, using arts and culture as a tool. SGA and Atlas Lab consulted on the planning project, which again sought deep engagement with the community.

Using the parkway as an engagement site, the team installed three "demonstration" art pieces to elicit feedback from the community for use in the strategy document. The first shared stories about Mariposa's unique history and asked questions about community identity and participants' relationship to place. The second was designed collaboratively with Southern Sierra Miwuk elders and demonstrated ecologically sound uses of the region's native plants, and the third offered seeds from the creek area and care instructions for replanting in other parts of the valley. Again, participation in the planning process was high and resulted in valuable input. The county adopted the Creative Placemaking Strategy in 2021. In the main, the strategy aims to leverage "art and design to promote a rich and compelling rural economy." (Mariposa County, 2022). It includes project, program and policy recommendations aimed at encouraging tourists to stay in, rather than pass through, Mariposa; increasing community attachment and engagement through the production of creative placemaking efforts representative of Mariposa's diverse identity; establishing cross-sector partnerships between arts, government, conservation, agriculture, tribal populations, human services and businesses; and integrating creative placemaking efforts into existing and future infrastructure.

3.4.3.6 Outcome

Mariposa County's success in utilizing arts, culture and creative placemaking practices to reinvigorate its expansion plan for the Mariposa Creek Parkway led to the production of a clear and inclusive master plan for the project. County planners indicate the process enabled deeper engagement with stakeholders who previously did not participate in county or transportation planning. It also fostered better relationships with a diverse group of organizations and strengthened partnerships that proved important when seeking funds for implementation of the next phase of parkway development.

Figure 3.16 Mariposa Creek Parkway (combined stone art and map), courtesy of Wikipedia

The success also convinced the county to develop a creative placemaking strategy that encourages continued integration of arts and culture in engagement and infrastructure outcomes.

3.4.3.7 Takeaways

- By incorporating arts and cultural practices in engagement and outreach efforts, planners gained participation from a broader segment of the area's population and were able to represent a greater diversity of perspectives in the feasibility study for the Mariposa Creek Project.
- The greater diversity of perspectives is already influencing the next phase of parkway development, for example, by incorporating Native American cultural land management practices, such as cultural burning in the removal of invasive plants and maintenance of native plants.
- The process-based successes in creating a master plan for the long-stalled creek parkway project encouraged the county to develop a creative placemaking strategy that will ensure replication of the practices that increased participation, especially of underrepresented groups, and fostered and solidified a diversity of partnerships.

3.5 ENVISION NOLENSVILLE PIKE: NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE

3.5.1 Introduction

South Nashville has attracted immigrant communities during the past two decades, hosting most of the city's ethnic diversity. Nashville has the largest Kurdish community in the United States, and various Latin American immigrants live and work along the Nolensville Pike corridor in the city. While the area is known as the gateway to Nashville's international district, Nolensville Pike is a highly traveled roadway with few pedestrian safety infrastructures. A local nonprofit organization took notice of the barriers to mobility embedded within Nolensville Pike and led a visioning exercise that spurred into a multimodal examination of the corridor. Through this method of using creative placemaking to engage residents who do not traditionally participate in planning processes, the organization began the Envision Nolensville Pike Collaborative, comprised of government agencies, civic groups and artists. The collaborative's continual engagement and documentation of the community's interest in reimagining a safer and more inclusive Nolensville Pike led to more artwork incorporated along business and

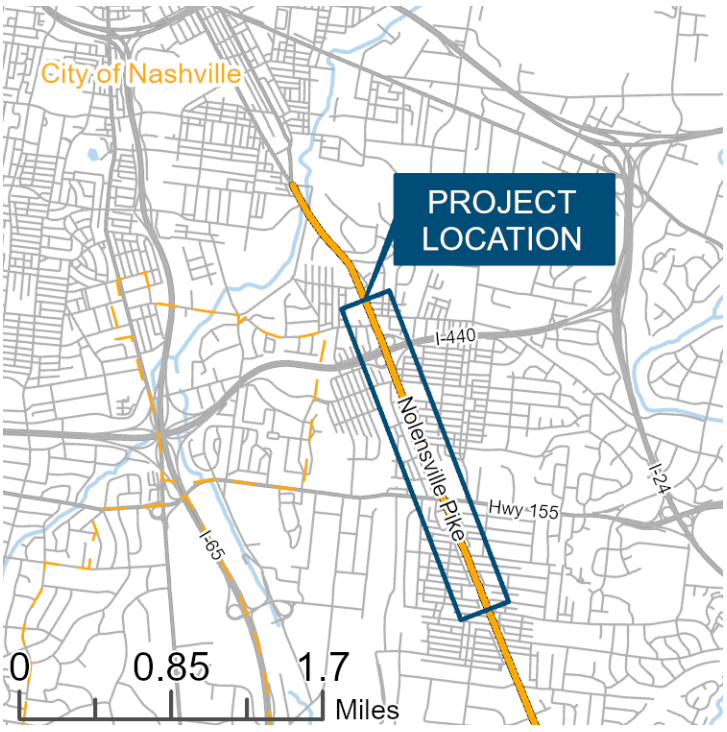

Figure 3.17 Project location detail map: Envision Nolensville Pike (Nashville, Tennessee)

community spaces and in bus shelters, plus it resulted in over $1 million in investments for infrastructure improvements along key intersections identified by the community.

3.5.2 Background

Nolensville Pike in southern Nashville has the typical characteristics of a "stroad." It is a multi-laned corridor combining street uses for businesses, cars and pedestrians while simultaneously functioning as a high-speed route connecting southeastern suburban and rural areas of Davidson County to the Nashville downtown. With Nashville's fast population growth, Nolensville Pike has also been the place where most of the city's immigrant population calls home. Recognized as the city's international district, the corridor is home to the largest Kurdish population in the U.S. and a significant Latinx population that live and work along Nolensville Pike. But as more families and immigrant communities continue to reside along the corridor, the safety of Nolensville Pike has become a major issue. A Vision Zero study of Nolensville Pike found that since 2014 there have been over 816 reported crashes along the corridor.[1] This largely results from inadequate pedestrian facilities and protections like crosswalks, signal heads and sidewalk connectivity, making crossing the street and waiting for the bus an onerous and dangerous task.

Figure 3.18 Bus shelter wrap, design by Tony Sobota, photo by Michael Deppisch

A local nonprofit organization serving the needs of its immigrant Latinx community has called Nolensville Pike its home for almost two decades. In 2013, Conexión Américas expanded their services and inaugurated a daycare across the pike from its community center, but families and leadership soon observed how unsafe it was crossing Nolensville Pike to drop off their children from the center's parking lot to the daycare. Other center visitors also found no way to safely cross the Pike, one of the most dangerous roads in the state of Tennessee. Concerned about addressing this infrastructural gap, Conexión Américas received funds to run community visioning exercises and discovered that residents were very practical about their transportation needs along Nolensville Pike. Staff from Conexión Américas sought to address this gap and closely collaborated with Nashville city staff and local planning experts, which eventually cemented the path to the Envision Nolensville Pike Collaborative.

The first major success of Conexión Américas in incorporating themselves and the voices of Nashville's Latinx population within transportation planning involved establishing what became the first bilingual crosswalk in the state of Tennessee. The crosswalk represented a small but significant goal that wedged open the possibility of using creative placemaking in transforming how public engagement happens in the city. With the support from major stakeholders such as Nashville's Public Works Department, the Greater Nashville Regional Council, Tennessee Department of Transportation and Transportation for

America, Conexión Américas prioritized transportation and creatively engaged with the Nolensville Pike neighbors to illustrate the limits and gaps in pedestrian safety, and ideas for rethinking the Pike. The Envision Nolensville Pike Collaborative grew past its original scope of state and nonprofit interactions, going on to influence Nashville city policies to center public engagement into its creative placemaking strategies.

Part of the initial success of the Envision Nolensville Pike Collaborative comes from Nashville's efforts in structurally addressing the city's safety and accessibility concerns through a creative civic practice assembled by both local and national organizations, and public and private sector leaders. By the early 2010s, as Nashville positioned itself as one of the fastest-growing regions in the country, leadership across the city was especially attuned to the role played by transportation in addressing community mobility needs and roadway safety. Following the sudden denial of state funding of a major bus rapid transit line in North Nashville due to a lack of public support, the city launched new initiatives to deepen its engagement efforts across Nashville, which included the work by Conexión Américas. These initiatives were supported by significant shifts in policy. In 2013, the city's mayor signed the first Complete Streets executive order as an initial step toward shifting public policy toward a more holistic view of transportation. This order led the city to draft a comprehensive transportation plan that prioritized street planning. Nashville's multimodal plan, Access Nashville 2040, provided a comprehensive framework that positioned equity as a priority by emphasizing neighborhood-based improvements. The accompanying Major and Collector Street Plan directed street planning in the city by defining streets according to their functions and land uses. With these changes in policy, Conexión Américas positioned itself as a voice of the Nolensville Pike community early on.

3.5.3 Findings

3.5.3.1 Organizational structure/context

Conexión Américas led the way in setting a precedent for creative placemaking in transportation public engagement actions across the city of Nashville. This was important, as later, with the additional support from changes in public policies, other organizations across the city government became partners in the Envision Nolensville Pike Collaborative. With new partners came several new initiatives — rooted in the original visioning exercises — that centered on improving pedestrian safety and studying potential community displacement amid disruptive regional investments.

3.5.3.2 Project partners

Local government, Nashville civic organizations, Metro Nashville Public Works Department, Metro Nashville Planning Department, Mayor's Office, Office of Transportation and Sustainability, WeGo Transit Authority, Metro Arts Nashville, Greater Nashville Regional Council, Conexión Américas, Salahadeen Center of Nashville, Walk Bike Nashville, Nashville Civic Design Center, TURBO Program

3.5.3.3 Financing

The infrastructure improvements to Nolensville Pike and the engagement processes were funded separately. Because Nolensville Pike is a state highway, the Tennessee Department of Transportation maintains it. The Metro Nashville Public Works Department maintains the signals, and WeGo Transit operates the bus route on Nolensville Pike. Following the ongoing engagement efforts led by Conexión Américas, in 2020 the Greater Nashville Regional Council received $980,000 in TDOT funding toward improving pedestrian access and safety along Nolensville Pike as identified in the engagement efforts in the collaborative. These improvements include pedestrian crossings and adding signage, signalization, lighting, and crosswalks; connecting bus stops to existing sidewalks; and adding bus shelters with concrete pads and an ADA-compliant boarding pad. In 2023, the U.S. Department of Transportation allocated an additional $13 million to continue funding safety improvements in the corridor.

The ongoing improvements to Nolensville Pike came after years of both city and privately funded community engagement efforts directed by Conexión Américas. Funds for the initial 2016 engagement efforts came from a Kresge Foundation grant that also supported the production of the "Envision Nolensville Pike Community, Creativity, and Imagination in Placemaking" report. In 2017, Conexión Américas received an ArtPlace America grant for $325,000 toward continuing engagement efforts and report writing. Part of the funds supported a high school internship program called "Design Your Neighborhood," where, over the course of a year, students collected pedestrian safety-related data on Nolensville Pike.

As the collaborative continued to grow, Metro Arts Nashville approved the hiring and funding of five local artists in designing streetscape improvements to Nolensville Pike. The funding is related to the city's Public Art Ordinance, which establishes that Metro Arts receive 1% of capital projects' net proceeds to apply toward commissioning and purchasing public art. Because these funds are not tied to specific projects, if they go unused, they accumulate. Because Metro Arts enough funding had accumulated from capital projects that did not include public art, Metro Arts used those funds to hire artists for Envision Nolensville Pike. These artists would explore ways to include art in both the processes behind transportation improvements and art as an object or physical outcome.

3.5.3.4 Timeline

By 2016, Conexión Américas sought to further engage residents creatively about their concerns with transportation along the pike. After a preliminary gauging of the community's infrastructure concerns, a multimodal examination of the corridor in three parts took off. First, high school students took the bus to Nolensville Pike to see for themselves and creatively imagine functional ways to integrate public art at the bus stop. Then, students interviewed longtime residents of the neighborhood to collect oral histories of life along Nolensville Pike. Finally, Conexión Américas embarked on a monthlong outreach campaign to the small businesses and residents to ask them what they viewed as the assets and possibilities of Nolensville Pike. These meetings met people where they were and centered around envisioning the potential of the community, using various rounds of discussions that were playful but

grounded on infrastructural concerns, such as bus service limits and the lack of adequate sidewalks and crosswalks.

The findings of the initial engagement efforts led by Conexión Américas became a focal part of the recommendations included in the 2017 Transportation for America Report. In this report, the corridor examination went beyond considering only direct transportation-related issues to framing the region's interest in investing in transportation as creating potential risk for displacement. Several of its major recommendations include continuing engagement, data collection and community assessment as Conexión Américas had piloted, conducted by a foundation-led collaborative. The plan also recommended a business alliance and a redevelopment district as measures to curb displacement.

In 2018, the Salahadeen Center of Nashville, a mosque and community center for Kurdish and Muslim residents, joined the Envision Nolensville Pike Collaborative. By including the Salahadeen Center in the collaborative, the multimodal examination of the pike extended to the intersection on Elysian Fields, where most businesses of the Little Kurdistan Neighborhood are located. The engagement efforts with the Salahadeen Center used creative placemaking in two significant ways. Part of the ArtPlace America funding went toward an internship program called Design Your Neighborhood. High school students of Kurdish and Latinx descent collected data related to pedestrian safety along Nolensville Pike and gathered information about community concerns over potential displacement caused by the regional infrastructure investments.

Figure 3.19 Playground at Azafrán Park, developed as part of Envision Nolensville Pike, photo by Michael Deppisch

Metro Arts Nashville further expanded its partnership with the Envision Nolensville Pike Collaborative by commissioning five local artists tasked with working on streetscape designs. Each artist was assigned a different neighborhood along Nolensville Pike and arrived to listen to their ideas for the changes along the corridor. Some artists, like Tony Sobota, became deeply embedded within the community they worked alongside. Sobota worked in creating the design for a neighborhood bus shelter, as well as painting a mural of an Erbil, Kurdistan, market in homage to the Kurdish immigrant community he engaged with. These murals and other examples of public art produced under the Envision Nolensville Pike umbrella were meant to create connectivity across the key neighborhood locations traversed by the corridor. Metro Arts contracted the fabricators for the four-transit shelter and utility box wrap designs created by the five artists, with technical support from the Public Works Department and WeGo Transit Authority. The bus shelter designs were made public by late 2019 and installed in 2022.

3.5.3.5 Process

Using art was an accessible outreach strategy to engage with the majority immigrant residents of the Nolensville Pike area, who are not traditionally represented in public meetings. By meeting people at varying times and in different parts of the community like in parks, grocery stores and places of worship, Envision Nolensville Pike showed that the community was engaged, albeit in a different way from traditional public participation processes. Having artists involved in the process emphasized creativity along with the engineering involved in improving safety. Tré Hardin, former public art coordinator of Metro Arts, spoke of the significance of artists building trust with the community throughout the project: The buy-in is a lot stronger when you have artists involved and create not just infrastructure but beauty within infrastructure."

Figure 3.20 The Nashville Civic Design Center, Azafrán Park, photo by Michael Deppisch

While having the community's needs and visions strongly accounted for in reports and plans was critical in ensuring funding endurance, just as important were the strong partnerships across lead infrastructure agencies in the city and the region. Envision Nolensville Pike sought to involve most of Nashville's public agencies and build relationships with leadership through continual meetings.

3.5.3.6 Outcome

The Envision Nolensville Pike Collaborative used arts as both aesthetics and as an outreach strategy. By integrating art in the process and in the outcome of the community engagement, the collaborative was effective in addressing the specific safety concerns of key intersections along Nolensville Pike. There were tangible efforts through installing temporary and permanent improvements like a mid-flight crossing near a park and flashing beacons that improved pedestrian safety.

The engagement and outreach were clearly documented and accounted for in plans. The alternative engagement strategies created trust over time, which made the community more receptive to the work of city leadership and planners. As Michael Briggs, the city's former manager of the Multimodal Transportation Planning team, recalls, "Without this [engagement], we would have not nearly had as much robust participation from community members." Collaborating with the community brought out the creative side of the pike improvements and made the infrastructure development feel less invasive upon people's lives as they took ownership of it. Additionally, the former community development manager of Conexión Américas recognized the significance of their efforts in creating a forum for underserved and underrepresented communities in city planning through a creative and playful way.

Even as key leaders in government partners changed, and the collaborative dissolved in 2020 as Conexión Américas shifted priorities to focus on COVID-19 mitigation, the efforts of the continuous

community engagement processes and other strong partnerships kept Nolensville Pike a priority corridor for infrastructure investments.

3.5.3.7 Takeaways

- Targeting important partners and building relationships across public agencies and private organizations was important to the success of the Envision Nolensville Pike Collaborative in securing infrastructure improvements along the corridor. The project developed over multiple stages and used various strategies for engagement, creating a continuous presence within the community. This also allowed for the collaborative to continue broadening to include artists and other private organizations.
- Closely documenting the results from the engagement processes through reports and plans allows for community-raised concerns to exist in writing. It is important to budget for engagement reporting, because decision-makers refer to these materials when considering future proposed improvements, as happened in the Nolensville Pike case.
- The role of "transportation champions" cannot be understated. Some of the smaller-scale projects associated with Envision Nolensville Pike persisted and became part of the larger collaborative because of efforts of key actors within Conexión Américas and the Greater Nashville Regional Council. Still, there were no clear efforts to create an institutional memory from these projects, which puts the attention toward future corridor improvements at risk.
- Just as key organizational actors heavily influenced project development, artists played a significant role as. Artists' engagement work ought to be recognized and valued as the first contact between the community and the government agencies, and the most continuous presence in the community.

Figure 3.21 Caminos y Raíces / Roots & Routes, by Jairo Prado, mosaic with coins from 77 countries, photo by Michael Deppisch

3.6 ART BRIDGES: PAWTUCKET, RHODE ISLAND

3.6.1 Introduction

This project would have been an art piece on an overpass crossing Interstate 95 through central Pawtucket, RI, in a neighborhood cut off from downtown by the interstate's construction. The project received national and regional grants and even spurred the development of a public art program in Pawtucket and award-winning community engagement. However, due to a combination of factors at the city and state DOT levels, the project has still not been built, and it seems likely that it never will be.

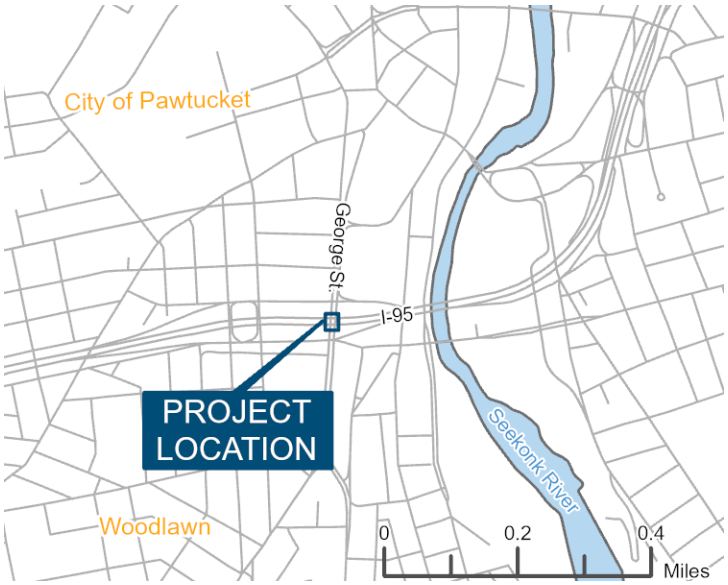

Figure 3.22 Project location detail map: Art bridges (Pawtucket, Rhode Island)

3.6.2 Background

Interstate 95 was originally planned through Rhode Island in the 1940s, before the advent of the interstate highway system. Those plans included following the railroad tracks through Pawtucket to stay closer to the manufacturing plants that built the city's economy. But as federal funding became available for the new system, the plans changed, sending the highway just south of downtown and cutting through the Woodlawn neighborhood. Woodlawn was and is known for being a minority community, with significant populations of black Cape Verdeans as well as Spanish-speaking immigrants. The highway displaced over 1,000 Pawtucket households, many with little to no warning.

Today, George Street is the main road over I-95 in Woodlawn, connecting downtown Pawtucket to this neighborhood. For motorists coming from the north, it is the first overpass after crossing the Pawtucket River, making it a gateway of sorts into the city. For nearby residents, it's a heavily trafficked street with a lot of commercial signage and an environment unfriendly to pedestrians. In 2014, the city of Pawtucket and RIDOT received a $75,000 grant from the National Endowment for the Arts to develop a series of artworks along the I-95 overpasses, starting with George Street. A follow-up grant from the New England Foundation for the Arts incorporated more project partners and was intended to help the city install its first-ever public art project. A nationwide call for artist proposals led to 115 proposals that were narrowed to three, with the winner being Suikang Zhao of New York.

Art Bridges was hailed for its excellent community engagement work, including earning an award from the Rhode Island Chapter of the American Planning Association. A local project consultant carried out 20 community meetings in 2015, including meetings between the finalists and community members, and meetings with a local high school whose students use George Street to get to school. One of the common themes was connection, since one of the goals of the art project was to reconnect neighborhoods that the building of I-95 had severed.

> *"The social context and the site's limitations are the keys to creativity, which make the artwork inventive. My public artworks are the community involved in various degrees…Therefore, asking for a specific project proposal for the first round RFQ stage is impractical for collaboration and further development of creating a "site-specific" public art project"* (Zhao 2023).

Zhao's design included sheets of perforated stainless steel in bright colors to be placed over the fence at the top of the overpass, meant to evoke a tapestry that would hearken back to Pawtucket's history as a mill town. It would also further the theme of connection: On the concrete wall of the overpass, words would be written in a vine-like shape, words from adjacent neighborhoods in multiple languages he would gather and incorporate from community meetings.

Despite the original plan to start construction in 2015, Art Bridges still has not been built.

3.6.3 Findings

3.6.3.1 Organizational structure/context

The city of Pawtucket originated the project, applying for the NEA grant and agreeing to match funds. The city hired a consultant to carry out the community engagement work, and the city did the call for proposals and selected the finalists. They had to work closely with RIDOT to get the project approved, and that is apparently where things fell apart.

3.6.3.2 Project partners

City of Pawtucket, Pawtucket Arts Collaborative, Tourism Council, the School Department, RIDOT, local theater groups, Pawtucket DPW, Pawtucket Planning, state Arts Council, local CAP agencies, Slater Mill, Pawtucket Citizens Development Corp, Blackstone Valley Community Action Program, R.I. Department of Health

The artist had significant experience working on transportation-art projects, including those for the Connecticut DOT and light rail in Phoenix. In an interview, he stressed the importance of avoiding a too-specific vision at the start, because it's essential to collaborate with the community to create a site-appropriate piece.

3.6.3.3 Financing

Grants from National Endowment for the arts (to be matched by the city) and New England Foundation for the Arts

3.6.3.4 Timeline

Table 3.4 Timeline: Art bridges (Pawtucket, Rhode Island)

October 2014	The city of Pawtucket receives NEA Our Town Grant
November 2014	115 artists answer national "Call for Art" for the George Street Overpass
January to April 2015	Community outreach
May 2015	Three finalist artists selected to visit Pawtucket
Summer 2015	George Street Overpass designs presented by finalists
September 2015	Public comment on three finalist designs
Fall 2016	Artwork [to be] installed on the George Street Overpass
2021 to 2022	Budget for Housing and Community Development includes $50,000 for installing art on the George Street Overpass

3.6.3.5 Process

The city originated the project and received the NEA grant before going to RIDOT to work out the details. The winning artwork was a series of sheets of perforated stainless steel meant to invoke the city's history in textile production, combined with metal vines that spelled out words important to the local community. The artist noted in an interview that "The design has gone through several proposals, which all went well with the art committee but were held by RIDOT. We first modified the design and finally changed the whole design according to the RIDOT input, but the project has gone nowhere so far." A 2017 newspaper article noted that the cost of shutting down lanes of I-95 to install the project was much higher than anticipated, and that RIDOT was concerned about the size and weight of the installation once they saw the city's permit application to install the art on the overpass.

The community engagement consultant stated that RIDOT objected to the project as proposed because of their concern it would distract drivers on I-95. She noted that she and others involved with the project offered to talk to RIDOT on the city's behalf, but the city insisted they could take care of it. She also noted that major economic development concerns at the same time might have distracted the city from following through with RIDOT.

3.6.3.6 Outcome

As of 2024, Art Bridges has not been constructed. The artist has not been told the project has been cancelled, and its funding still appears in a recent city budget, but no city or RIDOT authority seems to know the status of the project or at least will take an interview about it.

3.6.3.7 Takeaways

- The winning artist got his ideas from a community engagement process, which itself was award-winning. However, it seems that conversations with the state DOT should have occurred earlier in the process. It wasn't until the city was applying for a permit to install the art that RIDOT understood the size and scale of the project and objected accordingly.
- Partnerships are not only important in getting projects off the ground; they can also help sustain a project when it runs into difficulties. It seems, tentatively speaking, that the city's unwillingness to take help as offered from partner organizations was one of the reasons the project has stalled.

3.7 JADE-MIDWAY PLACEMAKING PROJECT: PORTLAND, OREGON

3.7.1 Introduction

Although transit is not the focus of this report, the Jade-Midway Placemaking Project in East Portland, OR, was such a successful example of incorporating arts and culture in a transportation project that it needed inclusion. This was a bus rapid transit (BRT) project planned for a major arterial running through two very ethnically diverse neighborhoods of East Portland, where fears of gentrification and displacement were prominent among low-income and non-English-speaking populations. Collaborations between the regional government, the transit agency, two municipalities, artists and community organizations showed great creativity in their use of arts in outreach and engagement and in seeking out funding sources. The project also succeeded because it explicitly tied affordable housing to transit accessibility, building trust with communities in the process.

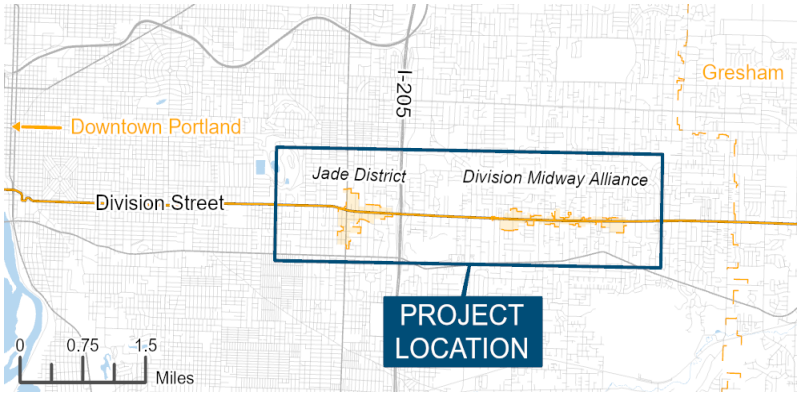

Figure 3.23 Project location detail map: Jade-Midway Placement Project (Portland, Oregon)

3.7.2 Background

Portland is often thought of as one of the most progressive cities in the U.S. because of both the city's and the state's history regarding land use planning and environmental regulation. However, it is important to consider exactly what that history means for how transportation planning happens differently here, and how other places might emulate it. The regional government of Portland, known as Metro, enjoys greater statutory land use authority than most other cities in the U.S. However, it is also the strong history of collaboration among different levels of government and with community organizations that sets Portland apart, and that *is* something other cities can emulate.

While Portland has one of the older light rail systems in the U.S., the expense of a new rail line led planners to consider a bus rapid transit line instead, down Division Street into far eastern Portland through the Jade and Midway neighborhoods. These neighborhoods are more ethnically diverse and have a lower income than Portland itself and the demographics of the region overall. Portland's reputation may be liberal and progressive, but when it comes to the negative impacts of transportation infrastructure on communities of color, it is no different than any other U.S. city. The African American community of Portland has been displaced twice: first with the building of Interstate 5 across the Willamette River from downtown, and second, through gentrification following the construction of the Yellow Line north from the city center. Asian and Eastern European residents of the Jade and Midway neighborhoods remembered that history and raised concerns that the bus rapid transit line would make their neighborhoods more accessible and more attractive to young white professionals priced out of housing closer to downtown.

It was therefore a priority for everyone involved in this project to connect affordable housing to transit accessibility. One method was through developing a memorandum of understanding between the governmental agencies involved and the affected communities, including a pledge to construct affordable housing next to some of the new bus rapid transit stops. It was also extremely important that community outreach include nonstandard methods to reach this diverse population. For example, rather than simply provide materials in English and Spanish, or hold public meetings at downtown city facilities, planners went to neighborhood gathering places, whether farmers markets, public events or community centers. They brought foods familiar to the cultural groups they were speaking to, such as Tibetan or Vietnamese, and they ensured that translations were available in Chinese, Russian, Ukrainian and other languages uncommon in public engagement.

"Agencies worked hard to go to the community, rather than have the community come to the agencies, which are in downtown 6-7 miles away. It was really important that these agencies did a lot of their meetings and outreach in the Jade District in the heart of this project. For Portland, this was the beginning of the practice of doing these events in culturally sensitive ways, including a Chinese interpreter and the conversation was in only Chinese. It brought out different groups of people to participate in the process. There were a lot of elderly folks who wouldn't normally have come out, and the community helped them come out by inviting them. A photograph of that became a symbol of that project—these agencies are trying" (Dacanay 2023).

The project's art components were a key way decision-makers were made aware of the diversity of the neighborhood and the concerns of its residents. Walking tours pointed out existing murals and artwork. Local artists created small, temporary projects as part of the public engagement process. For example, one artist worked with local high school students, showing them how the corridor looked before redlining and encouraging them to be more politically engaged in their community. One interviewee described cultural projects as *activators* rather than *artworks,* generating interest in the overall project and getting people to connect to each other and the place they live in different sorts of ways.

Figure 3.24 "See Me, Hear Me" taiko performance in East Portland, courtesy of APANO

The art component of the project was especially challenged by the federal requirement as of 2015 that federal funds cannot go to art on transit projects. This rule forced the project partners to look to other sources, such as Transportation for America — they had worked with Springboard in Minneapolis-St. Paul on the Green Line project, which multiple interviewees mentioned as especially inspirational for Portland. But the project also received money from the Kresge Foundation, and that shaped the project

considerably. In particular, Kresge was not interested in funding capital assets; they wanted to see results through social investment, which meant prioritizing engagement and community-building over producing physical objects. So, what started as a funding challenge ended up as motivation to fulfill a more inclusive and encompassing definition of art than is commonly the case on transportation projects. It also meant that the participating community organizations, such as the Asian Pacific American Neighborhood Organization (APANO), were able to build their own social capital, which benefited them in the much longer term. Additionally, since the funding amounts available were relatively small, the projects were more ephemeral or experimental, which enabled artists to be more creative and take more risks than, for example, a single artist producing a singular, large sculpture expected to endure for decades.

3.7.3 Findings

3.7.3.1 Organizational structure/context

Within the Portland region, the multi-county agency Metro is responsible for land use and transportation planning. Metro selects the projects and the specific sites where they will be built. They then turn the project over to TriMet, the regional transit agency, to construct and operate the transit projects. Since this BRT line was going through both Portland and Gresham, each city had to be involved in the economic development and affordable housing components of the project, as well as the community outreach. Community organizations such as APANO were extremely valuable partners in connecting these various levels of government with the communities through which the BRT would travel.

3.7.3.2 Project partners

City of Portland, Metro, TriMet, city of Gresham, APANO (Asian Pacific American Neighborhood Organization), Multi-Cultural Collaborative, six to eight local artists

3.7.3.3 Financing

In 2015, the federal government prohibited spending federal funds on transit art, so all the funding had to come from elsewhere: Transportation for America, Kresge Foundation, local arts organizations, and an Our Town grant from the National Endowment for the Arts.

3.7.3.4 Timeline

Table 3.5 Timeline: Jade-Midway Placemaking Project (Portland, Oregon)

2009	Metro identifies future locations for high-speed transit, including East Portland
2012 to 2013	Powell Division Transit and Development Project is established to plan the BRT line, along with economic development planning for the corridor
2014	Steering committee is formed and decides on bus over rail

2015	Public meetings and engagement are held along the corridor as the main part of the Jade-Midway Placemaking Project
December 2016	Locally preferred alternative is selected down Division Street
January 2017	TriMet takes over as the project leader
October 2019	Construction begins
Summer 2022	Capital portion of the project is completed
September 2022	BRT begins service as Frequent Express (FX)

3.7.3.5 Process

Existing connections between government and community organizations from previous projects in the region had already built trust. In particular, one community organization was willing to allow the public art staff member from one of the regional governmental organizations to participate on their behalf in the planning process. Because the Jade-Midway Placemaking Project went well, this trust was reinforced, making the new BRT corridor crossing Division Street easier.

As for the arts engagement, the transit agency worked closely with APANO, especially in identifying local artists who would be good for this project. The city of Portland sought many of the grants for the art itself, especially from the Kresge foundation, which meant they were putting out the calls for proposals for the artists. APANO also played a major role in securing community meeting spaces and resources within the affected neighborhoods, given the priority on meeting the community on their ground instead of distant locations.

Figure 3.25 Community members at planning workshop, photo by Oregon Metro

3.7.3.6 Outcome

Transit times are 30% faster in East Portland now that the BRT is in operation. Some bus stops were lost, and construction brought disruption, but the community considers it a win overall. In large part, this is because 600 units of affordable housing are under construction, in keeping with the community benefits memorandum of understanding signed by the governmental agencies involved. There continues to be an artist in residence for the Division Street corridor, who has retrofitted an old bus into a mobile arts and culture engagement site to reach as many different people as possible up and down the length of the BRT line. Additionally, the transit agency TriMet is currently revising existing policies to make it easier to incorporate ephemeral art and site activation projects within its public art scope. Most importantly, a new bus rapid transit line is being planned, perpendicular to this one, that will incorporate the same principles of arts and culture in its community engagement alongside building better connectivity between transit and land use.

3.7.3.7 Takeaways

- Seeking funding for arts and culture projects from foundations and other nonprofit sources can allow for greater flexibility than traditional transportation funding sources. Those organizations' requirements can also shape projects in new and interesting ways.
- Granting small amounts of money to multiple artists allows them to be more creative and take more chances than with a single, large payment for a permanent installation.
- Establishing trust between government agencies and community organizations takes a long time, but it is valuable. The extra time it takes to do extensive outreach, including translating or interpreting into additional languages, meeting in spaces and at times convenient to a wide range of residents, and returning for follow-up meetings, can pay off in community support that makes the project move more smoothly overall.
- Thinking about what transportation does beyond moving people and goods is fundamental. The relationship between transportation accessibility and land use, especially the affordability of housing, can have major community impacts. Community members know that full well — planners and engineers need to know it and incorporate it in their work, too.

3.8 CHICANO PARK: SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA

3.8.1 Introduction

The murals in Chicano Park began to emerge on the pylons supporting the Interstate 5 ramp to the Coronado Bridge in the early 1970s. Located on California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) infrastructure, this public art is a study in conflict, mitigation, negotiation, and the evolving relationship between a state institution and the largely Latinx community of Barrio Logan. This case study research examines two periods of mural restoration to demonstrate how reciprocity in this relationship acknowledges the value of the murals to the community, the city of San Diego, art and social justice history, and Caltrans.

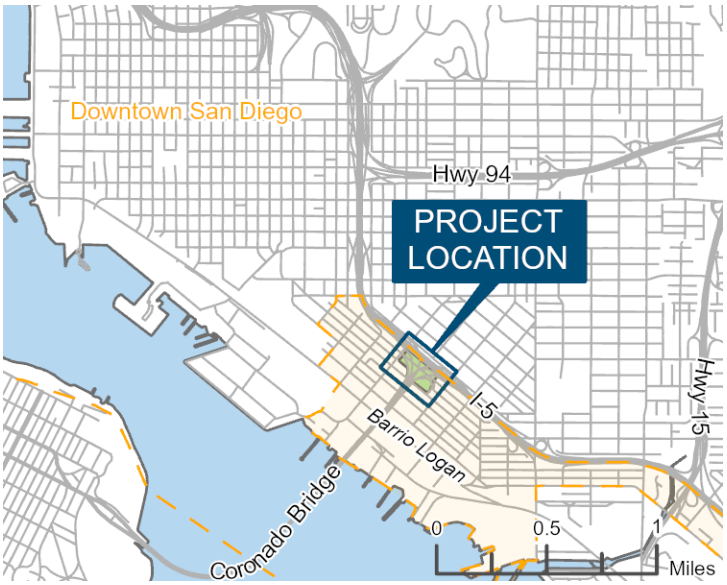

Figure 3.26 Project location detail map: Chicano Park (San Diego, California)

3.8.2 Background

> *"Chicano Park is the geographic and emotional heart of Barrio Logan"* (SDTA 2023).

At the center of Barrio Logan, which the tourism authority claims as the city's oldest Mexican American neighborhood, sits a 7.4-acre park area with over 100 paintings, a kiosk emulating an Aztec pyramid, parkland, a playground, multi-purpose courts, community gardens, picnic tables, and a museum. The Chicano Park Steering Committee (CPSC) earned National Register of Historic Places and National Historic Landmark designations in 2012 and 2016 in recognition of the artistic, cultural and sociopolitical significance of this space. The Chicano Park Museum opened in 2022, and on April 23, 2023, tens of thousands came out to celebrate the 53rd Chicano Park Day festival.

Figure 3.27 Celebrants at Chicano Park Day, photo by Ariana Drehsler

Barrio Logan is located on San Diego Bay, just east of downtown. It was a diverse middle-income neighborhood until the mid-1920s, when bayfront land was converted for U.S. Navy and defense industry purposes. This started a decades-long battle against industrial encroachment into residential areas, a process enshrined in the 1978 Barrio Logan Community Plan. In the 1960s, the community was further decimated when Caltrans demolished area homes and split the neighborhood for the I-5 bypass route and ramps to the Coronado Bridge (Diaz 2020). To mitigate the impacts of the transportation infrastructure, residents were promised a park on land beneath the massive and intrusive bridge ramps. In 1970, the city instead offered the underpass acreage to the California Highway Patrol for a station and parking lot. Residents and local business owners surrounded the bulldozers on site for 12 days, and a grassroots neighborhood group, the CPSC, was formed to pressure government officials while issues of land ownership and commitments to the community were reconciled. Activists began planting the site, and in 1971 the official formation of Chicano Park was granted. In 1973, local Latinx artists who were part of the larger activist Chicano Movement (El Movimiento) began to render images on the pylons expressing their Mexican and Latin American history, thought and culture (Latorre 2008).

Today, the 100-plus paintings depict images of Mexican pre-Colombian gods, mythical and legendary icons, botanical elements, and animals (Rosen and Fisher 2001). They represent the colonial experience and revolutionary struggles, and affirm Chicano achievements, identity and heroes like La Adelita, Cesar Chavez, Father Miguel Hidalgo, Che Guevara, Pancho Villa and Emiliano Zapata. The transportation infrastructure stands as a physical testament to a history of intrusions into the working-class Latinx community.

Yet it also represents a positive evolution in the way Caltrans engages with Barrio Logan, as well as how Caltrans representatives have come to understand and appreciate the value of the Chicano Park murals.

3.8.3 Findings

3.8.3.1 Organizational structure/context

Local governments and Caltrans' relationship with the Latinx community and the park is a work in progress. The city of San Diego's Historical Site Board designated the park a historic site in 1980 (Salazar 2023). In 1987 the Public Arts Advisory Board recognized the murals as "meritorious," and in 1992 the Commission for Arts and Culture proclaimed the murals "the largest, most important collection of outdoors murals in the country." Yet despite the value brought to the city's arts and tourism economies, the city and Caltrans have historically deemed the maintenance of the murals a community responsibility. Local artists and the CPSC bore the cost of touching up the work until 2002. Recognizing the burden of this cost and considering the DOT's responsibility to manage the infrastructure, in 1991 Caltrans offered to train artists in newer repair techniques to make the process more efficient and cost-effective, but the CPSC and artists still paid for supplies and volunteered their labor.

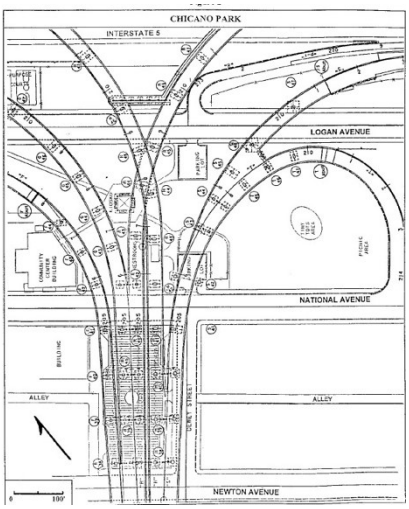

Figure 3.28 Map of freeway and bridge infrastructure, courtesy of Rosen and Fisher

In the early 1990s, Caltrans began a mandated seismic/earthquake retrofit program requiring bridge reinforcement work statewide (Rosen and Fisher 2001). There are five bridge approach ramps in Chicano Park, and each is painted with murals. The murals are formally recognized as historic by the city, and Caltrans' preliminary historic preservation research for the retrofit project demonstrated they also qualified for placement on the National Register under Criterion A for their association with the Chicano Civil Rights Movement, recognizing the value of muralism in artistic and social endeavors. Caltrans had to comply with federal and state laws regarding impacts to significant cultural resources, so the standard practice of encasing the pylons in steel and adding a layer of reenforcing concrete was not an option, since it would destroy the murals.

Though the murals have received local, national, and international recognition, they are, most important, deeply valued by the Barrio Logan community who lives with the legacy of the transportation infrastructure.

"The murals could not be harmed. That was Caltrans' rallying cry, from all divisions, right up to the District 11 Director, Gary Gallegos, who stated that 'the murals must be protected at all costs.'" (Rosen and Fisher 2001, 107)

To meet the seismic goals while preserving the murals, Caltrans engineers sought an innovative strategy involving the diaphragm areas above the columns. Caltrans also hired an art conservator who photo-documented the murals and oversaw contractor operations during construction. Only one mural (of the 40 in existence at the time) was impacted, and Caltrans funded its recreation by the original artist. Finally, Caltrans requested concurrent park and mural eligibility for the national and California historic registers, enabling the CPSC to secure grant funding for the registration process and future restoration efforts.

Figure 3.29 Local residents using the park facilities, photo by Ariana Drehsler

3.8.3.2 Project partners

Five decades of many stakeholders have partnered with the Chicano Park Steering Committee for projects related to the murals and other park elements. The list of partners provided here represents partnerships relative to the two restoration projects and the seismic retrofit work that initiated the valuation of the murals.

Chicano Park Steering Committee; Former California Arts Council senior staffer, Josie Talamantez (serves on the CPSC); Ramon Chunky Sanchez, a local musician and community leader (served as president of the CPSC for several decades); Chicano artist collectives Los Toltecas en Aztlán and El Congreso de

Artistas Chicanos en Aztlán; Chicano artists Salvador Torres, Victor Ochoa, Sal Barajas and Mario Torero — active community artivists for 50-plus years who did much of the unpaid restoration work prior to 2002; Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlán (MEChA); Dr. Alberto Pulido, University of San Diego, and students in his Introduction to Ethnic Studies course; University of San Diego, Department of Ethnic Studies, Mulvaney Center for Community Awareness and Social Action; District 11 Director Laurie Berman and, later, Gary Gallegos; Caltrans' contracted art conservator and photographer; California Department of Transportation (Caltrans); Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (National Historic Preservation Act, Section 106); California State Historic Preservation Officer; Save Our Heritage Organization (SOHO); city of San Diego; California Arts Council; various local assembly members, including representative Lorena Gonzales who introduced the Chicano Park funding bill in 2019; Ghiradelli and Associates, consultants on the 2002 restoration project

3.8.3.3 Financing

Table 3.6 Financing: Chicano Park (San Diego, California)

1970 to 2012	CPSC fundraising efforts	**Small local grants and artist-funded mural restoration**
2002	Federal Highway Administration TE grant	**$1.6 million**
2022	State of California budget bill	**$2.5 million**

3.8.3.4 Timeline

Table 3.7 Timeline: Chicano Park (San Diego, California)

2002 to 2012	Restoration of 20 murals
2022 to present	Restoration project underway

3.8.3.5 Process

The CPSC was established in 1970 to oversee the development and expansion of Chicano Park on behalf of the community of Barrio Logan and to ensure the park maintains a Chicano/Mexicano/Indigenous identity. The community-driven mitigation effort aimed to "transform the cold grey concrete and rock-hard dirt that once dominated the site into a glorious thing of beauty that would mirror and showcase the beauty, culture and spirit of the Chicano people" (CPSC 2023). Until the early 2000s the CPSC would use their network to contact the artist if a mural needed maintenance or repair. They would also lead efforts to raise funds from the community for paint and supplies. Artists would rally their mural colleagues for out-of-pocket paid supplies to cover graffiti or touch up chipped concrete. They did not receive any compensation for the work they did on the beautification project.

By the 1990s many of the oldest murals had faded and needed repair (Salazar 2023). In 1999, Caltrans applied for a Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) grant through the Transportation Enhancement program. In 2002, Caltrans received $1.6 million to repair 18 murals. Under the grant, the FHWA

ensured compliance with Section 106 under the National Historic Preservation Act, and Caltrans was responsible for consulting with California State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO). Ismael Salazar was the Chicano Park Mural Restoration project manager at Caltrans and notes it was "not a large project in terms of cost or size," but it was unique and unlike anything a Caltrans project manager had dealt with before. "We could not follow the normal project development process of preparing plans and writing specifications nor could we advertise for bids to general contractors as we normally would do." Caltrans initially sought to execute cooperative agreements with both the city of San Diego and the California Arts Council, asking them to partner with the agency, oversee the work and distribute funds. Both declined. Instead, Caltrans did the development planning directly with the SHPO, artists, community activists and city staff.

As an initial step, the CPSC assessed and selected the murals most in need of repair (Salazar 2023). From 2004 to 2006, Caltrans contracted artists Victor Ochoa, Sal Barajas, Memo Cavada and Jose A. Ramirez to create a manual that detailed how to return the selected murals to their original state. This collaboration required justification for a noncompetitive bid process. It was determined the original artists possessed unique historical knowledge and technical expertise, and a contract was established with them through the CPSC. Caltrans published the Chicano Park mural restoration technical manual and made it available for use throughout the DOT (Orozco, Barajas et al. 2006, Cruz 2023).

To manage the day-to-day operation and restoration work, Caltrans hired Ghiradelli and Associates, an experienced consultant in developing and restoring murals on exterior architectural surfaces (Salazar 2023). Ghiradelli was tasked with locating the original artists and inviting them to restore their own murals. Absent the original artist, another was invited to replace them. Caltrans could not hire the artists directly, because most did not have the required bonding and insurance, so the consultant hired them as subcontractors. The layers of complexity and nonstandard practices associated with the project delayed payment to the artists and extended the project's timeline. Work did not start until June of 2011. Only five murals were worked on at a time to ensure the park remained viable to the public. In the end, 20 murals were restored by August of 2012.

In conjunction with the restoration project, the students from the Department of Ethnic Studies at the University of San Diego worked with Professor Alberto Lopez Pulido, the CPSC and the artists to map and gather details about each mural's content (DoES 2015).

> *"It was the desire of the CPSC that the mural restoration project be documented along with all the other murals and sculptures found at Chicano Park … as a way to learn about the important history of the Chican@ movement through the history of Chicano Park"* (DoES 2015).

In 2019, Representative Lorena Gonzalez introduced a bill requesting $10 million from the state's budget for Chicano Park. The request was granted in 2021 and funded in 2022 (Cruz 2023). The legislative bill grants $7.5 million to the Chicano Park Museum to complete the buildout and fund programming, and $2.5 million for the restoration of the murals. For this restoration project, Caltrans is partnering with the CPSC. They will be the managing consultant for the project. The Chicano Park Museum is a 501c3 and

will function as the fiscal sponsor. Lucas Cruz, president of the CPSC, indicated the current Caltrans project manager is the brother of the Chicano Park Restoration Project manager from 2002 and understands the value of partnering directly with the local community organization. Work on the murals began in 2023, and some of the original artists have been enrolled to update their works (Torero 2023). New technology is also being introduced as part of the process. A synthetic fabric called Polytab enables the artist to paint portions of the mural off-site, which encourages collaboration with the community before it is affixed to the pylon in the park. The new material replicates the look of the other park murals and can be removed. Restoration work is expected to continue through late 2024.

Figure 3.30 Local residents making their way home after celebrating Chicano Park Day, photo by Ariana Drehsler

3.8.3.6 Outcome

The California Department of Transportation's Project Development Procedures Manual provides a framework for developing highway improvement projects and has maintained a Transportation Art section since 1977. Recognizing "the effects of transportation facilities on local communities," the section encourages "integrating" art pieces in the highway right of way — either freestanding or placed on a transportation feature — that "express the community's history, resources, or character." The art becomes property of the state, and there are guidelines for its creation and maintenance. The DOT cedes responsibility for funding design, construction, access for maintenance, maintenance, and removal to other public agencies. But Caltrans administers the vetting and permitting process and oversees the project implementation and maintenance of the DOT space surrounding the art.

The agency's openness to the inclusion of arts and culture does not make them experts in all aspects and disciplines of public art, but it represents a desire to mitigate the negative impacts their infrastructure has on communities (Salazar 2023). And it is iterative, meaning the project managers learn from communities and artists and, in turn, continue to shape and update their art policies. So, for example, a positive outcome from the 2002 restoration project was a process manual that helped inform updates regarding the maintenance of murals throughout the state. And according to the CPSC president, the project manager and staff from the 2002 restoration also learned about the value of local knowledge and, despite pushback from procurement, were willing to enroll the CPSC to function as the consulting partner on the current restoration project as a result.

The 2002 project manager considered the first restoration project a success and recalls the CPSC and the mural artists being pleased with the outcome (Salazar 2023). The Advisory Council on Historic Preservation also considers the Chicano Park mural restoration a "106 Success Story" and features it on their website (ACHP 2022).

> *"Caltrans was able to help a low income, minority community restore a place to celebrate their heritage and enjoy exceptional works of art."* (ACHP 2022)

Additional accolades received after the completion of the first restoration include:

Table 3.8 Additional accolades received: Chicano Park (San Diego, California)

2012	City of San Diego — Award of Excellence for Cultural Landscape
2012	Women in Transportation Society (WTS) International, San Diego Chapter — Rosa Parks Excellence in Diversity Award
2012	San Diego Architectural Foundation — Grand Orchid Award
2013	Governor's Historic Preservation Award
2013	Construction Management Association of America (CMAA), San Diego Chapter — Award of Excellence in Transportation

In the wake of the first restoration project, a new corridor director appointed a special facilitator at Caltrans to communicate directly with the community (Cruz 2023). And after the bill to fund a second major restoration was awarded, a group of higher-level leaders at Caltrans visited the park and the museum and met with members of the CPSC. Both actions did a lot to restore trust by the community.

Another outcome was negative and points to a lack of communication and transparency on the part of the DOT. According to the president of the CPSC, the delay between funding in 2002 and the start of the restoration work in 2011 led many in the Barrio Logan community to believe that the $1.6 million earmarked for mural restoration was misappropriated. Although this was not true, the close to 10 years for Caltrans to initiate the project caused speculation and distrust within the community.

Also, while the consulting arrangement between Caltrans and Ghiradelli and Associates enabled the DOT to overcome some constraints to working with artists — created by Caltrans' bonding and insurance requirements — the layering made it difficult for the artists to get paid in a timely manner (Cruz 2023, Salazar 2023).

Figure 3.31 Local residents walking through the park to get to area shops, photo by Ariana Drehsler

The most valuable outcome of the mural restoration efforts has been the maintenance of an important mitigation device, which has transformed the desolate and disconnecting space under the massive and intrusive bridge ramps into a vibrant and activated space for use by the community. A local journalist reflected on the value of this mitigating space by noting:

> *"[We came] down Logan Avenue, where a massive lowrider festival was in full swing. Behind the cars and various booths were thriving small businesses. We turned on Sampson Street towards Barrio Station, a neighborhood house providing a range of community services. Everywhere around me was evidence of Chicano Park's social impact and how it has played such a significant role in fostering widespread economic gains—all of it radiating from this place under the highways."* (Diaz 2020)

The murals are a narrative history of the community that enables members to reclaim some sense of power despite the history of powerlessness against institutional decisions that decimated their neighborhood. Facilitating and encouraging the presence of the murals is a necessity in the continuing relationship with Caltrans and the mitigation of the DOT's infrastructure.

Figure 3.32 Skateboarders using facilities in Chicano Park. Photo by Ariana Drehsler

3.8.3.7 Takeaways

- Incorporating art into this project to mitigate community impacts fostered other forms of innovation in areas such as engineering (alternative retrofit procedure) and improved knowledge that can benefit other DOT efforts (mural restoration manual, use of Polytab for restoration), suggesting an evolving and reciprocal relationship between Caltrans and the community.
- Also, in an iterative process, Caltrans project managers have developed a deeper understanding and consideration of the value in the local knowledge of artists and community members in relation to the impact of arts and cultural projects.
- A limitation with successful but unique projects is the lack of institutional knowledge, which hinders both current and future project managers. When asked about the seismic retrofit process or the process to get historic preservation designation for the park and murals, project manager Salazar replied that he couldn't assist with insights on those processes because the "staff member who worked on this has since retired." (Salazar 2023).
- The president of the CPSC lamented the lack of staff knowledge associated with each project or interaction with Caltrans, suggesting that experience "leaves with each new Caltrans representative." The appointment of a special facilitator at Caltrans whose role is to interact

with the Barrio Logan community and maintain some historical knowledge of the issues and successes mitigates this issue.

- The lack of transparency in communicating project timelines and institutional processes led to misinterpretation by the Barrio Logan community, perpetuating a lack of trust in Caltrans. Clarifying how institutions work and why project delays occur is a necessity of engagement and needs to be prioritized.
- The slow pace of distributing institutional funds can mean smaller subcontractors, like artists and culture bearers, may experience delays in receiving payment for their work, which may cause hardships for their households.
- Chicano Park, after five decades, is an exemplar of the value in including arts and culture in DOT project work as a mitigating factor for impacted communities.

3.9 SOUTH PARK AVENUE, TUCSON, ARIZONA

3.9.1 Introduction

This is an older project, with funding awarded in 1996 through the Livable Communities Initiative of the Federal Transit Administration. As one of the few African American communities in the Southwest, South Park is distinctive because not only is it hemmed in by transportation infrastructure, but the victim of economic loss when highway construction drew commercial traffic away from what had been the business core of the African American neighborhood. The Livable Communities grant was intended to enhance the economic development of the neighborhood through arts and transportation improvements.

Figure 3.33 Project location detail map: South Park Avenue (Tucson, Arizona)

3.9.2 Background

The neighborhood of South Park in Tucson, centered on South Park Avenue, is approximately 40% African American and 40% Latinx. In the 1940s, it was one of only two areas in or near Tucson where African Americans could buy land, even though it fell outside city limits and therefore offered no city services. Today, it is also a low-income neighborhood, adjacent to major highways and former military installations. In the early 1980s, Kino Boulevard was built on the eastern edge of the neighborhood, posing a problem not so much in terms of noise or air pollution but as a draw for businesses that subsequently moved away from South Park Avenue.

3.9.3 Findings

3.9.3.1 Organizational structure/context

The South Park Avenue project was led by the Tucson Department of Transportation and funded by the Federal Transit Administration, based on a community development plan carried out by the Tucson Urban League and the University of Arizona Architecture Department.

3.9.3.2 Project partners

Tucson Department of Transportation (TDOT), Federal Transit Administration (FTA), Tucson Urban League, South Park Neighborhood Business Association, University of Arizona (UA), U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

3.9.3.3 Financing

Table 3.9 Financing: South Park Avenue (Tucson, Arizona)

Livable Communities Initiative of the Federal Transit Administration	**$1.5 million**
City of Tucson	**$100,000**

3.9.3.4 Timeline

Table 3.10 Timeline: South Park Avenue (Tucson, Arizona)

1989 to 1991	Tucson Urban League partners with the University of Arizona to develop the South Park Area Community Development Plan
1995	TDOT is awarded $1 million from the FTA Livable Communities Initiative
1996	TDOT receives another $0.5 million from the FTA; monthly community meetings are held
1997	Community members who will participate in the mosaic art portion of the project receive instruction at the South Park Community Art Center
1998	Installation of art pieces begins on South Park Avenue
1999	Project is completed

3.9.3.5 Process

The project began as a collaboration between the Tucson Urban League and the Architecture Department at the University of Arizona to develop an economic development plan for the declining area along South Park Avenue. The construction of Kino Parkway to the east as a connector between downtown and the Tucson International Airport was drawing businesses away from South Park, in addition to the structural problems facing communities of color at the time. The city took the report and, through the city department of transportation, was able to get funds from the FTA for streetscape improvements to encourage pedestrian activity along South Park Avenue and its businesses.

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) notes that after a series of public meetings with very low attendance, “neighborhood walkabouts” were held to show the community that “the project and people working on it were real and accessible,” as one TDOT representative put it (p. 6). In addition, TDOT also conducted in-home interviews with several respected elders in the South Park community. Public meetings also started to involve charette-style voting among alternatives using ballots and sticky notes, which is now a common feature of public meetings but was not so common in the mid-1990s.

Too-Ree-Nee Keiser, a local public artist, was hired to oversee the public art participation at the newly created South Park Community Art Center, including the creation of mosaic tiles, totems, and trash container shells. Bus shelters were designed to reflect community priorities, including roofs that looked like they were being held up by human figures to symbolize the resilience and community spirit of South Park. The final project consisted of seven bus shelters, walls that display community-created mosaics, plaques on sites of historic interest, new traffic signals, landscaping and curb access ramps.

Figure 3.34 Mosaics along South Park Avenue, photo by Arizona Daily Star

3.9.3.6 Outcome

The community development plan created by the Urban League-UA partnership was key to identifying the issues facing the community and how transportation and mobility were part of those issues. Then, TDOT was motivated to search for federal funding that would match those community needs. TDOT also agreed to try harder to involve the community, including innovative methods such as “walkabouts,” in-home interviews, and live voting for preferred alternatives.

The FHWA report noted that further institutionalization of the lessons learned would be required for the project to be considered truly successful. Unfortunately, the institutionalized lessons seem to have fallen through. The South Park Community Art Center established for the project no longer exists;

neither does the South Park Business Association. Disappointingly, UA Architecture's 2004 update of the community development plan only mentions this project in passing, suggesting it had a limited long-term effect on the neighborhood.

3.9.3.7 Takeaways

- Transportation agencies must be willing to look beyond their strictly delimited legal purview, as TDOT did in this case by using a community development plan created to spur economic development as justification for providing pedestrian, road and transit improvements.
- Integrating local features and community symbols into projects can help to garner local interest and acceptance — but that requires intensive, one-on-one engagement with community members to find out exactly what those features and symbols are.
- Past histories of community neglect and even endangerment in the building of large infrastructure may dissuade community members from engaging in new projects even when asked directly. This takes patience, creativity, and persistence on the part of transportation agencies.
- As an older project, it was not possible to find the original artist, project manager or TDOT officials to inform later updates and processes. Lack of institutional memory is probably part of why the outcomes have not lasted beyond the physical art objects.

CHAPTER 4: ARTISTS-IN-RESIDENCE-PROGRAMS

In this chapter, we describe the four programs across the U.S. to date where an artist or artists have been embedded within transportation departments in an artist-in-residence program. Two programs took place in city departments: Chattanooga, TN, and Los Angeles, CA. Two others, operating at about the same time, took place within state departments of transportation: Minnesota and Washington. Because all were longer-term sets of activities focused on an artist or artists selected for the program rather than on one transportation project, we consider them separately from the other case studies. They also offer different kinds of lessons because of the nature of the residency programs, and so the takeaways beyond those listed beneath each case study are summarized separately in the concluding chapter of the report.

4.1 CHATTANOOGA ARTIST-IN-RESIDENCE

4.1.1 Introduction

Influenced by the experience of a former employee in St. Paul, Minn., the city of Chattanooga sought an opportunity to better include public art and artists in city work. In 2020, Chattanooga inaugurated a city artist-in-residence program whose responsibilities included ample community engagement efforts during the COVID-19 disruption. The inaugural city artist continually engaged with residents, but she experienced limitations in pushing the boundaries she was told to push. Did she misunderstand her employer, or they, her? How can the government and the artist in residence learn each other's languages? In other words, the experience of the artist-in-residence program in Chattanooga suggests an important question to consider: Is the government prepared to adopt the changes proposed by an artist, and has the artist learned the internal culture of the city?

4.1.2 Background

When the idea of an artist-in-residence program first arose in Chattanooga, Eric Asboe worked as deputy administrator of the Chattanooga Department of Transportation and recalled the success of the program in St. Paul. Having observed how artist work embedded within city functions brought productive disruptions, this served as a model for the creation of the program in Chattanooga. Prior to the onboarding of the inaugural artist in 2020, the city had recently passed a Public Art Strategic Plan outlining processes toward the funding, managing and reviewing of public art projects. Among the potential projects outlined in the strategic plan were demonstration projects describing strategies in acquiring and exhibiting public art in city-owned property. These projects emphasized opportunities for local artists. The plan prescribes that the Public Art Commission work to create a roster of artists who, among their responsibilities, would lead community engagement efforts. The plan included an artist-in-residence program as a potential way to introduce local artists into collaborative projects in the public realm.

4.1.3 Findings

4.1.3.1 Organizational structure

In 2013, mayor Andy Berke created the Chattanooga Department of Transportation (CDOT), a stand-alone division of the city in charge of transportation policy, design and operational functions. Housing different transportation functions such as roadway planning and safety into a single DOT was meant to elevate the focus on people-centered transportation. The new CDOT had three primary divisions: day-to-day operations, a Smart Cities division, and a project management division that closely followed the city's Complete Street ordinance in short- and long-term projects.

Concurrent to these changes in the organizational conditions of transportation decision-making in Chattanooga, the mayor and the city council provided increased support to public art related projects. In 2015, the city allocated $50,000 of its budget toward public art. The following year, the mayor created a full-time public art director. As a small but growing program, the public art staff shared enthusiasm for introducing a different way to think of public art in relation to city projects. This public art policy would give shape to how the city responded to the artist-in-residence program.

After asking local artists and evaluating alternatives for ways to create a city artist program, public art staff in conjunction with city leadership established an artist-in-residence position within the city government. The one-year part-time position was open to artists working in a broad scope of mediums, and its primary charge was to work closely with the community in project development. Within these wide parameters, the artist was also invited to challenge city staff and introduce different perspectives and skills into the public realm. And though the CDOT hosted the inaugural artist in residence, the program was designed so that any city department could request to host a city artist.

4.1.3.2 Project partners

Chattanooga Department of Transportation, Chattanooga Public Art Commission,
Chattanooga Design Studio

4.1.3.3 Financing

The city funded the AIR artist. After discussing the best way to set up a position that would enable local artists to continue their outside artistic practices, and after consulting with local artists, city staff decided to make the position part-time. An important benefit of integrating the role within city government was ease with payroll while offering continuity to the program. The City Artist program was designed to be highly mobile and durable: Artists could exist across different departments, and, as a budgeted position in the city, it created longevity in the program. Citing her experience as the first hired artist, Jules Downum recommended in her closing report that the city change the position to full time to allow the artists to fully immerse themselves in the projects.

4.1.3.4 Timeline

Following the call for artists, the city chose Jules Downum of The Pop-Up Project as the inaugural city artist. But her time began right as the city of Chattanooga closed due to the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020. The job description was a call to artists to "apply their creative process to various systems and projects within city government," and while that promise originally drew Downum to the position, she soon discovered gaps in actual practice, largely from no clear definition of where the city artist worked from within the city's hierarchy. Still, with the support of city staff who designed the position, Downum engaged the community even amid the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The first engagement event was called "The Rolling Surprise," celebrated in June 2020 after two months of weekly meetings with organizational partners and neighborhood residents. The Rolling Surprise was a resource distribution event with donated art kits from a local children's museum, journals, masks, and lists with COVID community resources. As the community and other partners were ready to move along with The Rolling Surprise, CDOT withdrew from the event out of COVID risk concerns, but the sustained relationship with the community allowed for the event to go on. In an interview with one of the community partners who participated in the event, Downum noted that it was the strong relationship with the community and the sense of ownership felt during the planning process that allowed the event to take place, despite the city's last-minute withdrawal.

> *"True collaboration means no one owns it. The community members who invested their time and took this over really understand that. They saved the event and still found a way to have a great outcome in spite of such a last-minute change."*

Drawing from this experience, Downum's second major project concerned the city's COVID-19 event recovery strategies. Her draft guidelines would become part of the city's recommended plan, based on CDC event guidelines and collaboration with local public health experts.

Into the second year of the artist-in-residence program, Downum worked on engaging the Patten Towers community, a low-income apartment complex for seniors in downtown Chattanooga. Prior to Downum's engagement activities there in 2021, Patten Towers had been involved in a creative placemaking project with the Chattanooga Design Studio. Among her goals with the engagement process was to maintain the city's relationship with residents and create opportunities for them to influence the changes occurring in the public space abutting Patten Towers. Along the way, Downum also collected information on residents' desires for infrastructural change concurrent to the creative placemaking efforts done by the Chattanooga Design Studio. Among her engagement strategies were a dance video with residents, a gospel concert at a nearby park, and a block party. Through these various events, Downum became a continuous presence in Patten Towers and slowly built relationships and trust with residents on behalf of the city.

4.1.3.5 Process

CDOT left artist-in-residence responsibilities deliberately undefined to allow for more flexibility in selecting projects for their tenure. The scope of work for the inaugural position fell within the work by CDOT and included potential emphasis on public engagement, wayfinding and traffic calming. Downum chose to focus on public engagement, but there were no specific descriptions on the parameters of her work. This, and the challenges of working within the institutional culture of the city of Chattanooga, became barriers to Downum's artistic practice. In her report, Downum highlighted how interacting across departments caused conflict with a strict bureaucratic hierarchy that did not encourage a broad scope of work in flexible jurisdictions.

In addition to the difficulty of placing an artist in residence within the city hierarchy, there was a disconnect in defining the appropriateness for arts engagement in infrastructure projects. During her tenure, Downum identified reluctance in city staff to work with her because of limitations from state and federal regulations on roadway planning, especially in relation to signage and safety guidelines. This challenge brings up an important question to consider: To what degree can an artist disrupt certain features of transportation planning?

4.1.3.6 Outcome

Despite no clear definition on the scope of work an artist-in-residence program must accomplish, the inaugural artist created and sustained relationships with the communities she engaged on behalf of CDOT. However, the frictions Downum experienced during her time as city artist worked to highlight the limitations in Chattanooga's institutional culture. Those adjacent to the program noted how the program succeeded in productively disrupting, albeit minimally, the structures in place. The position still exists as a paid, part-time job in Chattanooga, but since then, Downum has been the only artist in residence to work for the city.

4.1.3.7 Takeaways

- What is the artist's role within city government? The development of the Chattanooga artist-in-residence program brought up important debates about a part-time versus full-time position, where the artist falls within the city's hierarchy and the scope of their project role. Defining the scope of work and establishing parameters is important to ensure a successful program.
- A robust public art policy and support from local leadership is important in establishing these programs, but just as important is creating and building a culture that's open to an artist in residence. The inaugural experience in Chattanooga demonstrated that an additional factor to consider is whether the city's institutional culture makes government employees receptive to the presence of an artist in residence.

4.2 LOS ANGELES DOT (LADOT) ARTIST-IN-RESIDENCE

4.2.1 Background

Creative Catalyst is one of five grant programs offered through the Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs (DCA). Launched under a mayoral edict, a poet laureate was embedded with the city's library for two years before the focus shifted to the Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT) in 2016. The grant program, which enrolls artists in residence (AIR) to work with city staff, aims to encourage outside-the-box thinking. The inaugural DCA and DOT collaboration focused on the city's Vision Zero mission, which is part of a national program encouraging all municipal, state and national planners to enact plans and policies to reduce traffic deaths to zero. The inaugural artist used storytelling practices to build empathy among the city's civil engineers for those killed in traffic accidents. The AIR program is credited with bringing about a cultural shift at LADOT.

4.2.2 Findings

4.2.2.1 Organizational structure/context

DCA administers the grant program in collaboration with the city's DOT, putting out the call for artists, managing the selection and contracting process, and aligning the artist with a department manager at the DOT. Day to day, the artist reports to a DOT supervisor and works with a team of DCA and DOT staff to develop and deliver a project. City staff provide communication support for public engagement. Through this AIR program, the DCA has funded two artists under two, two-year programs.

The artist role is "part-time," and they are expected to attend mandatory DOT meetings and network with DOT and other city staff, community members and tourists, and elected officials. They are required to report their progress twice monthly to their DOT supervisor and deliver their project concept to a team of DCA and DOT staff for review, revision and implementation. Additionally, the artist is expected to draft a final report and make recommendations to the DOT about how they can sustain creativity in their work.

4.2.2.2 Project partners

Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs, Los Angeles Department of Transportation

4.2.2.3 Financing

Under the inaugural program, DCA paid the artist a stipend of $52,000 per year, but no specific budget was established to fund project implementation.

To remove barriers to implementation, the second AIR artist was paid an annual stipend of $70,000 and was responsible for budgeting and funding the implantation of their project from these proceeds.

4.2.2.4 Timeline

Table 4.1 Timeline: Los Angeles (LADOT) artist-in-residence program

2016 and 2017	Alan Nakagawa was AIR with the LADOT
2019 and 2020	Renee Reizman was AIR with the LADOT
2021 to the present	The AIR grant program is on hold and undergoing redesign

4.2.2.5 Outcome

In the inaugural year of the AIR program, DCA selected artist Alan Nakagawa to be embedded with the DOT.vi Nakagawa had worked in civil service, and this experience helped him engage civil engineers at the DOT in thinking about not only the data and design aspects of their work, but the people impacted by the design. Using storytelling as a tool, Nakagawa facilitated a series of workshops inviting families of pedestrians killed in traffic accidents and the drivers who killed the pedestrians to talk about the impact of their loss or experience. The stories were recorded and became part of a podcast. Engineers learned communication, storytelling and listening skills as part of the process and were deeply affected by the experience. Nakagawa also produced a series of temporary art pieces, such as perfume boxes installed at bus stations to deliver scents of local flora to passengers. Renee Reizman's residency was interrupted by the COVID pandemic and had a less successful outcome, because she was unable to engage at a deeper level with DOT or the public. Her creative product was an installation of 100 neon "slow- down turtles," and she created playful costumes representing various traffic signs that could be used to animate dangerous intersections and raise driver awareness.

Nakagawa's process project, while highly impactful and successful, stalled when less senior DOT staff wishing to further incorporate it into the 5,000-person division failed to gain momentum to fund and replicate the process. Likewise, both artists' public art pieces gained notoriety from the public but failed to win division-wide buy-in from DOT supervisors, which will limit replication or use of the art in the future.

In part, current DCA and DOT configuration limits buy-in. DCA staff who have creative placemaking knowledge do not interact with the artist once assigned to a DOT supervisor. The DCA grants director indicates this left the artist feeling isolated, especially when the DOT supervisor was too busy to collaborate with them or did not understand their conceptual ideas. The DCA is currently considering a more project-specific AIR focus that gives the artist less project-development autonomy. However, the mayoral edict has shifted to solving issues of homelessness, and the DCA and DOT collaboration is on hold. Despite the less-than-overwhelming support for the AIR grant collaboration, the DOT has been hiring artists to work creatively on specific projects — outside of DCA programming — and this suggests the concept of incorporating arts and culture into LADOT work has gained acceptance among individual project managers.

4.2.2.6 Takeaways

- Feedback from staff participants in the AIR process outcome and public interaction with and notoriety of the temporary art pieces indicate project success. So does the hiring of artists

directly by project managers – suggesting a desire to incorporate creative placemaking in LADOTs practices to better engage the public, overcoming cultural and language barriers.

- The configuration of the collaborative program created problems when DCA staff expertise was applied only to the administrative functions of the program, leaving DOT supervisors, unfamiliar with creative placemaking practice, to oversee the artist and project concepts. A closer collaboration of the day-to-day function of the program would enable DCA staff to help DOT supervisors better interpret the creative practices and ensure buy-in.
- Despite the less-than-enthusiastic buy-in from senior staff, the AIR outcomes were well received and seen as impactful by lower-level staff, prompting efforts by civil engineers to sustain process outcomes, and managers to incorporate the arts into individual projects.
- Lacking a specific city-wide policy effort to incorporate arts, culture and creative placemaking into all aspects of the city's work means the AIR program is subject to changes in political vision as new officials take office.

4.3 MINNESOTA DOT (MnDOT) ARTIST-IN-RESIDENCE

4.3.1 Introduction

4.3.1.1 Background

MnDOT's artist-in-residence program was initiated by the national organization Smart Growth America (SGA) under their Transportation 4 America program (Oh, 2023). Their director of Arts and Culture, Ben Stone, approached MnDOT's commissioner after learning about the work being done for the Rethinking I-94 project. He proposed a collaboration between SGA and MnDOT. MnDOT's commissioner saw this as a good opportunity, and SGA advanced an artist-in-residence (AIR) program for both Minnesota's and Washington state's DOTs.

In general, organizations and agencies expect AIR artists to find creative solutions to entrenched transport problems. Their deliverables aim to make the streets safer, organize transit advocates, engage stakeholders, foster local ownership of transportation infrastructure and programs, and alleviate the disruptions of construction. The term of the residency is one year, and MnDOT develops a theme for the artist such as community vitality, transportation equity, sustainability or public health. Within that theme, artists must produce specific creative deliverables — a project, process or program — using any medium, from visual arts to music and performance.

The residency requires a 20-hour-per-week commitment, pays a stipend to the artist, and provides a budget for the deliverables. The position is housed in Sustainability and Public Health, but over the year-long tenure artists must rotate into different MnDOT departments to learn the organization's functions.

From their AIR experience and despite some learning curve issues, MnDOT has found a clear role for creative placemaking practices within the agency, provided there are clear outcomes for the artists that match the expectations of MnDOT's program managers. As they evaluate next steps, they are also considering other ways of incorporating creative placemaking into everyday MnDOT processes. Artists

could also be engaged through private consultants around community engagement, for example, or MnDOT could create a staff role for an arts administrator who would oversee an AIR program or find other means of integrating artists' work into the agency's work.

4.3.2 Findings

4.3.2.1 Organizational structure/context

For MnDOT's pilot AIR program, the selected artist worked under contract to SGA but embedded within the DOT. SGA developed the call for artists, contracted with the artist and invoiced MnDOT for the work done. MnDOT interacted with and provided direction to the artist during the residency and oversaw their experience in their department rotations. MnDOT also managed and guided the artist's process as they prepared their deliverables.

4.3.2.2 Project partners

Minnesota Department of Transportation, Smart Growth America, resident artists, McKnight Foundation

4.3.2.3 Financing

Each artist was paid a $40,000 annual stipend and received up to $15,000 to cover the cost of their deliverable(s).

SGA funded about $5,000 of the program, and MnDOT was responsible for the balance, for which it received grants from McKnight Foundation. The agency also covered some costs out of its own budget.

4.3.2.4 Timeline

Table 4.2 Timeline: Minnesota DOT (MnDOT) artist-in-residence program

January 2019	Smart Growth America contacts MnDOT to gauge their interest in an artist-in-residence program
2019 to 2020	Year 1 with artist Marcus Young
2020 to 2021	Year 2 with artist Marcus Young (extended due to COVID); workshop with WSDOT to share results
2021 to 2023	Years 3-4 with Sarah Petersen
2023 to 2024	MnDOT Evaluation of the program

4.3.2.5 Process

SGA initiated the program each year, under a three-year pilot, by issuing the call for artists and administering the partner and artist contracts for which they issued invoices to MnDOT. After the three-year pilot, MnDOT would need to follow regular procurement protocols ensuring a competitive hiring process if it wished to continue the program. This would reshape the partnership with SGA.

Once brought on board, the artist was introduced to MnDOT's chosen theme and began their department rotations. Initially the rotations were for four months, but this proved to be insufficient time since the artist residency was a part-time appointment. Plans also had to be adjusted because of COVID, therefore the timelines were extended for each artist. The extended timeframes appeared to help the artists build better relationships with MnDOT staff. And embedding the artist within different departments of the agency proved to be important, leading individual staff to feel their voices had been heard and appreciated in the artists' fact-finding, which benefited the overall project.

The inaugural artist, Marcus Young, produced a process for MnDOT using open-space technology with cohorts of MnDOT leaders to generate ideas around "people centered" practices. He also temporarily redesigned a MnDOT conference room. Rebranded the "Land Acknowledgment Confluence Room," it offered materials such as library materials and art works, and a space to learn about and reflect on diversity and inclusion. He also developed a process to elevate staff voices around how to better reflect on the history of racism in transportation planning and implementation, and how to build a more equitable future. The concepts behind these processes, combined with the results of a visioning session attended by 200 community members, were translated into a "zine"-type guide for MnDOT staff to use in tandem with the state's multimodal transportation plan.

The AIR's second artist focused on a campaign to reduce "Vehicle Miles Traveled." (Petersen, 2024). Working with BIPOC graphic artists, Sarah Petersen designed a series of internal and external workshops, parlor games, and an advertising campaign that included a website and posters all promoting lifestyle changes such as combining shopping excursions and other errands into one outing and supporting attitude shifts away from single-person vehicles to walking, biking, and taking public transportation.

MnDOT has a small grant from the National Endowment for the Arts to perform a limited evaluation of the AIR program. Interviews were held with the artists, and an internal survey will likely be conducted, but they do not currently have the funding for an intensive evaluation of the program and assessment of how to better integrate artists into the daily work of MnDOT.

4.3.2.6 Outcome

The artists involved in the pilot residency produced several products and processes of value to MnDOT, and as a result, staff indicate that some of their entrenched transportation problems can benefit from the creative perspective and practices initiated by artists and culture bearers.

> *"The projects I was doing were iterative and meant to build on each other and were just fundamentally going to take more time. So, I think that was a good learning experience for everybody, to learn how to make room for those sort of iterative processes"* (Petersen 2024).

The program concept grew out of SGA's published scan of field-based case studies exploring how artists are contributing to transportation solutions. Since DOTs had been an untested environment for AIR programs, it was beneficial for MnDOT to partner with SGA and have them take on the administrative

role for the program, although it limited relationship-building between MnDOT and local arts organizations that could have administered this type of program for the DOT. There was a slow learning curve for MnDOT, however, on how to support and direct the artists. For example, leeway in how artists accomplished the work created tension between the artists' desire to have an open-ended process, and the desire of the agency to allocate specific resources to specific projects with measurable outcomes and deliverables. At the same time, artists had to create a balance between being innovative enough in their work that it would not lead MnDOT staff to say they could have accomplished it themselves, versus being so "out there" that MnDOT would not be able to learn from the experience. Artists in a part-time role also struggled to achieve interaction with MnDOT staff, especially given the desire to connect with district offices across the state and during the transition from office to "work from home" arrangements. Yet the AIR program had the positive effect of opening the door for more internal creative placemaking practices at MnDOT. The agency has funding to hire artists through a subcontractor for three specific projects around public health, maintenance and electrification equity. For now, MnDOT will use this project-specific approach rather than embedding an artist within the agency as the path forward. They are also exploring changing vendor and procurement policy or providing more resources in this realm so that artists can more easily interact as small businesses with the DOT. For example, prequalification contracts could preapprove certain individuals for listing as creative contractors who could then be called on for future projects.

4.3.2.7 Takeaways

- Although programmatic challenges affected the AIR experience, overall, the program highlighted the value and need for arts intervention within the problem-solving work of the organization. Notably, AIR is just one of many formats MnDOT could explore to do this work.
- There is tension between, one, giving artists the leeway to devise their own ways to assessing the needs of the agency and creatively developing a solution, and two, meeting the expectations of MnDOT staff and working within project timelines. This tension could be resolved in some cases by more clearly defining project goals and timelines for the artist and reshaping staff expectations. Allowing the integration of more than one type of arts and culturally based program at MnDOT would also solve this tension.
- Tension also arises from keeping a project relatable and useful to MnDOT staff but risking an outcome so similar to their existing work that they feel they could have done it themselves.
- Fostering a more collaborative space for the artists to work with MnDOT staff would ensure more staff can engage and work with the artists, alleviate some of the "time pressure" felt by the artist and staff, and accommodate different approaches to engagement by different artists. Making it clear that staff can take time from their other duties to engage with artists is also vital.
- Still to be addressed: partnering challenges such as defining who the artist "reports" to (i.e., SGA or MnDOT) and the exclusion of local artist organizations from building relationships with MnDOT due to SGA's preferred status as a national organization.

4.4 WASHINGTON STATE DOT ARTIST-IN-RESIDENCE

4.4.1 Introduction

The first artist-in-residence program within a state transportation agency was through the Washington State DOT, or WSDOT. The residency started in 2019, and it is ongoing in the form of short-term-funded projects. The artists were not required to produce specific deliverables but spent about half of their first year interviewing workers and riding along with them across the state and throughout the org chart. Both artists and the DOT felt this was a very successful collaboration, and both would like to see it continue in Washington and in other states as well.

4.4.2 Background

The artists who won the call for proposals (Mary Welcome and Kelly Gregory) had experience in cultural programming and community organizing but not in transportation (which was not required). The call for proposals was very wide-open, so the artists planned on first observing and embedding with different offices within the DOT before coming up with specific projects. A designated liaison within the DOT introduced them to different departments, and they spent about six months traveling across the state to see different regions and offices, about 600 hours total of interviews, ride-alongs and workshops.

One of the most successful components of this project was bringing more attention to maintenance workers within the DOT. The artists did this via a newsletter that focused on the work that maintenance laborers do. The transportation industry and maybe even the average citizen are aware of the underfunding of transportation infrastructure maintenance, but few understand and fully appreciate the people who actually do the labor of maintenance. The artists' campaign, "Maintenance is sexy," was meant to highlight the importance of the function of maintenance within the DOT. One creative but never-implemented idea was holding a ribbon- cutting ceremony for a filled pothole, elevating the important task of maintaining existing facilities by granting it an inauguration ceremony typically reserved for new infrastructure.

The initial funding was only for a year, but additional grants were found, and then WSDOT partially funded additional work themselves (albeit with a little pushback from the state legislature). Funding has continued project by project, but the artists remain very interested in continuing the AIR work. In part this is because of the time they took to build the relationships within WSDOT, half of the original first year. The artists also noted that while they don't know of any concrete changes occurring within the DOT, they observed an improvement in morale among maintenance workers, which was especially valuable at a time when it was difficult to hire them. The artists' goal with extending work on maintenance would be to make political connections that get more funding from the state legislature if they can demonstrate the importance of infrastructure maintenance.

One of the issues the program had to handle was the misconception on the part of many people within the DOT over why the artists were there. They expected to see a mural or a sculpture as a finished product, or perhaps painting underpasses to prevent graffiti. The liaison between the artists and the

DOT had to explain many times that their purpose was not to produce artworks, but to understand the processes behind DOT's functions and how those processes might be improved. Once the residency started, it turned out to be valuable for workers within the DOT to realize someone was listening to them and valued their work, not just in maintenance but throughout the department. Even those who were initially skeptical about talking to artists within a department of transportation later said how fun and energizing it was and became enthusiastic supporters.

> *"But like people really loved just even meeting with them and having really insightful questions asked of them. And you know what it made them feel. You know, as public servants, we don't always get made to feel like our work matters…And so I think just having these artists come in with really great questions and really digging in and showing interest in their work, people loved it"* (Anonymous 2023).

4.4.3 Findings

4.4.3.1 Organizational structure/context

The artists were working under a grant from Smart Growth America, but they were embedded within the Washington State DOT. This was the first artist-in-residence program within a state transportation agency in the U.S. (beating Minnesota by only one week). One individual worked as a liaison between the artists and the entire agency, helping them to obtain contacts and interviews throughout the organization.

4.4.3.2 Project partners

Washington State DOT (WSDOT), Smart Growth America, artists (Mary Welcome and Kelly Gregory)

4.4.3.3 Financing

Grants from Smart Growth America, ArtPlace America grant, and the National Endowment for the Arts grant; later, WSDOT

Timeline

Table 4.3 Timeline: Washington State DOT artist-in-residence program

January 2019	Smart Growth America contacts WSDOT to gauge their interest in an artist-in-residence program (the secretary of transportation used to work for SGA)
2019 to 2020	Year 1 of the Artists-in-Residence program
2020 to 21	Year 2, partially funded by WSDOT
2021 to the present	Continuing small projects as funding is available

4.4.3.4 Process

There was an open call for artists as part of the initial grant. Mary Welcome and Kelly Gregory applied as a team because they'd already worked with each other. No specific deliverables were required; it was up to the artists to explore the DOT and come up with their own projects, which they believed key to their success. The artists traveled around the state to different offices, getting to know the work and workers of the DOT, and vice versa, before formally starting their work.

> *"what gave us the space to feel successful about this work, if success is measured in the value of a relationship, is that there wasn't an emphasis put on specific deliverables and a tight process. I think so much within institutions is extremely systemized for excellent reasons, but that isn't necessarily the most productive process if you want meaningful, engaged, impactful creative work"* (Wellcome 2023).

The original residency was only for a year, but additional funding and to some extent the pandemic meant that the artists were able to continue their work for four years. They are very interested in pursuing this type of work in other state DOTs, and they're even presenting their work at the Transportation Research Board in 2024.

4.4.3.5 Outcome

One of the main outcomes was a book titled "The Bridge" that compiles the artists' experiences across the state. They also created a newsletter for maintenance workers, bumper stickers, a deck of cards with conversation starters, and a transportation social club. While a formal evaluation has not been made of the project, interviewees felt that even the skeptics within the DOT were convinced of the value of having an artist in residence in both making them feel appreciated and getting them to think about how they do their work.

Takeaways

- Both the artists and the DOT felt that the wide-open, flexible nature of their charge was fundamental to their success. Without needing to produce specific deliverables, they could listen to the needs and interests of people within WSDOT and develop projects based on what they heard.
- Beginning the project with external funding from grants meant that specific outcomes did not have to be produced for either WSDOT or the state legislature. In the second year of the project, when some WSDOT funding was used, legislators were happy to see a 50/50 split with granting agencies.
- Rethinking art as a process rather than a product was one of the key learnings for WSDOT workers, but in the end, they felt it was a valuable experience.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In this section, we bring together the takeaways from our case studies and artist-in-residence summaries. We distill the many detailed case-by-case takeaways as *findings*. The findings are grouped into three broad categories of lessons learned: those internal to the institution, those focused on relationships between institutions and the community, and those focusing specifically on different ways of understanding arts and culture. There are five overarching findings, and we offer specific *actions* that can be taken in response to these findings, as well as highlight two or three case studies that exemplify each finding.

5.1 CASE STUDY FINDINGS

5.1.1 Internal Institutional Findings

5.1.1.1 Finding #1: Lack of institutional memory and documentation is common and damaging. (Chicano Park, El Paso, Pawtucket, Tucson)

Across multiple case studies, we repeatedly found that a lack of documentation and or institutional memory either kept a project from being fully implemented or limited its effects to the very short term. One of the ways in which this was observed was the multiple times we contacted an agency or organization for interviews and were told that the only person who knew anything about that project had moved on, and nobody currently working there would be able to help us. While this might reflect a reluctance to talk about decisions made by someone else, it also highlights why it's difficult to replicate successful one-off creative placemaking projects and information about positive outcomes if not shared across departments and agencies. Furthermore, when one individual holds all the relevant information about a successful project or collaboration, it limits the ability of other staff members within an institution or community setting to learn from the work and grow in their own practice.

Examples include the Art Bridges project in Pawtucket, which has been delayed because of concerns raised by RIDOT. The individuals within the city government and the state DOT who were active in the project's development and part of the decision-making process, however, have since moved elsewhere. Not only does this make the project's resolution less of a priority, it also means institutional knowledge about past discussions and deliberations are lost. There was some documentation of the public engagement process, but the decisions made by the government agencies in question were not documented as well. Lacking champions, the project remains on hold, which is damaging relationships with the partners who worked to get national grants and make the project a reality. Moreover, public trust is also at risk the longer the project remains incomplete since enthusiasm for the artist and artwork was built during the engagement process.

The Chicano Park case study in San Diego exemplifies what happens when institutional knowledge is not maintained in relation to infrastructure that has been in place for over five decades and continues to impact a community. The same people will rarely remain involved over the course of decades, making the need to document and maintain historical knowledge even more critical so that DOT staff and the

community are not asked to “reinvent the wheel” time and time again. A well-kept history of interactions and projects related to highly impactful transportation infrastructure is needed to maintain good community relations and also to apply lessons learned from previous actions.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Appoint a facilitator to take on the role of maintaining institutional memory
- Closely document the engagement process and evaluate the successes and challenges for creative placemaking projects

One of the notable outcomes of the Chicano Park project was the choice by Caltrans to appoint a facilitator whose job it is to retain and pass on institutional memory around the project. This appointment helped in restoring trust in the community after decades of distrust around past decisions and the community’s need to continually fight for recognition. The facilitator is expected to make future projects easier for both Caltrans and the community because, even when individuals leave the relationship, the memory of the community’s needs and what processes worked for Caltrans will be intact.

Agencies can also look to the Atlanta Regional Council, Jade-Midway and Nolensville Pike case studies as examples of how to evaluate and maintain institutional memory about important creative interventions. The institutions closely documented the public engagement process. This record will endure well beyond a specific project and become a resource for the public, partners and agency staff. The public can more easily see what kinds of outreach and engagement efforts were taken in the past, and what resulted from those efforts. And, importantly, the documentation provides future planners and engineers with a history they can build upon when reengaging the community. Offering some knowledge of the community’s needs as stated in the past validates those “asks” and builds trust, whereas the alternative of continually asking a community what they want, again and again, devalues their needs. This is especially true when not everything originally promised in a project comes to be, such as in the Nolensville Pike case study. Institutional staff can be more sensitive to those unmet needs if they know their agency’s past interactions with the community and, in advance, consider meeting them in future projects.

5.1.1.2 Finding #2: State DOTs and other large bureaucracies can do more than you might think. (ARC, Chicano Park, Grand Marais, Mariposa Creek, Nolensville Pike, Portland, Tucson)

As outlined in one of the opening chapters of this document, state DOTs are constrained to some extent by legislative and funding requirements. However, they also may be constrained by habit, custom or unique interpretations rather than by actual prohibition. Our case studies revealed several ways agencies thought “outside the box” in terms of using outside resources, developing clarifying policies and toolkits, or thinking about transportation in a broader context, beyond just vehicles on pavement.

For example, the Jade-Midway Corridor in Portland explicitly conceptualized art not as a finished object to be displayed in the right of way but as a process of engagement. Because of the federal prohibition on using federal funding for art in transit, they turned to the Kresge Foundation for funding. The

foundation perceives art as activation rather than as an object and asked Portland's transit leaders to adopt this ethos in their use of grant monies. The projects in the corridor therefore became smaller in scale, involved multiple artists, and allowed the artists to be more creative in terms of their interactions with the community, because the projects were focused on community identity and engagement rather than public art. Focusing on activation also enabled local nonprofits and regional agencies to work more closely together and build trust, which has long-term benefits of its own.

Similarly, in Grand Marais, art was envisioned as a communication and engagement tool rather than an aesthetic enhancement, meaning funds earmarked for communication could be used to conduct community interviews and produce the signs that mitigated effects of the highway construction project. Finally, in the case of Atlanta's Regional Commission, confusion over the federal arts prohibition also led the institution to reconsider and identify what it was they were accomplishing through creative placemaking. Their realization that the work was more about engagement and acknowledging community identity than it was about beautification or aesthetics refocused their programming, and the commission grew in their creative outreach efforts and work to share knowledge of this process with other institutions and organizations.

In other words, shifting the perspective away from older, traditional ways of thinking about the role of art in transportation planning as simply aesthetic enhancements, and reflecting on engagement goals such as community identity and health and inclusivity, enables institutions to reshape their arts and cultural programming so that creative interventions — which may or may not have a public art outcome — are more effectively used to elicit those engagement goals.

So, in the case of Portland, the effort to get around the perceived limitations taught the institution how to create better and more effective engagement projects and include more partners. In Atlanta, the same effort to overcome perceived federal limitations sparked internal reflections on the type of work they were doing, making it clear that the old conversations about art no longer fit how they were practicing arts and culture. To solidify this new understanding, a creative placemaking strategy was developed to lead the institution into new and more productive conversations about arts and culture.

In addition to thinking about art, culture and creative placemaking as an engagement tool rather than a beautification tool, many of our case studies demonstrated a broader understanding of the role transportation plays in larger economic, social and cultural contexts. In Tucson, the city DOT leveraged a community development plan to get federal transit funding to develop creative pedestrian and transit enhancements intended to improve access to small businesses in the South Park Avenue corridor. The economic viability of the historic black commercial corridor motivated the project, not aesthetics or traditional beautification efforts. Understanding the close connection between transportation infrastructure and economic development, the city DOT used arts and culture at the scale of the small business district to improve the quality of life for a community negatively impacted by transportation infrastructure.

Finally, we found a diversity of interpretations and expressions of federal guidelines by different DOTs and note that the FHWA offers different interpretations of arts and cultural considerations in

transportation projects, as well. For example, the federal Transportation Enhancement grant program funded elements of several projects we looked at, suggesting that the role of art in transportation funding rests in a gray area as opposed to being something the FHWA will not allow. At the state level, Caltrans' *Project Development Procedures Manual* demonstrates the variation in interpretation. It is like MnDOT's development guide, except for the Caltrans section on transportation art in place since the 1970s. The section is iterative and updated based on Caltrans' experience in seeking to serve communities and mitigate impacts in communities like Barrio Logan, where Chicano Park is located. Other states in which our case studies took place, including Texas and Oregon, also offer explicit policies and procedures for art in their standards and manuals. In the case of Oregon, the Portland regional level policy section is being rewritten based on the experience with creative placemaking in the Jade-Midway Corridor. The update aims to broaden the definition of art and make sure that events or performances are also considered alongside artworks and aesthetics.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Shift the perspective away from older, traditional ways of thinking about the role of art in transportation planning as simply aesthetic enhancements, to a focus on how arts, culture and creative placemaking can help institutions meet improved engagement goals that acknowledge community identity, consider community health and practice inclusivity.
- Similarly, consider the broader processes that transportation and mobility are part of, such as housing accessibility, small-business success and biodiversity to tap into additional partner and funding resources, alterative creative placemaking practices for improved engagement outcomes, and alternative interpretations of the role arts and culture will play in state DOT practices overall.

As demonstrated in many of our case studies, small, grant-funded projects built on each other, where success with one grant clarifies the need and desires of the community for more engagement, make it easier to get the next grant. External grant funds and partnerships propelled projects the community desired beyond pilot stages and enabled relationships between artists, communities and agencies to deepen over time. These results were possible because the institutions shifted their perspectives on what "art" meant to the projects — seeing it as an engagement rather than aesthetic tool. We also note that the documentation that external funding sources often require in grant reports is one way of meeting our first recommendation to better document and evaluate successful creative placemaking efforts.

And as indicated in our case studies, mobility and transportation touch on so many other aspects of people's lives that it's fundamental to keep a broad focus. Strategically highlighting the transportation's relationship to the environment, housing, and social and environmental efforts opens opportunities to partner with organizations doing this work, which can be tapped to bring arts and cultural practices into transportation projects for the purpose of mitigating harms. Private foundations are also interested in community quality-of-life and/or environmental restoration concerns and can partner with organizations directly or through local municipalities. The lasting effect of relationship-building that brings creative placemaking to transportation projects is the opportunity to replicate practices on future

projects. Further, state legislators who are skeptical about using taxpayer dollars for arts and cultural purposes may be amenable to creative placemaking work if stakeholders demonstrate that matching funds are coming from foundations or other organizations. To grow these more creative strategies requires looking beyond the right of way to use art as activation.

5.1.2 Findings Regarding External Relationships

5.1.2.1 Finding #3: Community trust is incredibly important and incredibly fragile. (ARC, Chicano Park, Grand Marais, Mariposa Creek, Nolensville Pike)

Figure 5.1 Local residents and food vendors in Chicano Park, photo by Ariana Drehsler

The case studies in this research project indicate that incorporating arts, culture and creative placemaking into transportation planning and engagement practices can build and maintain community trust. That trust translates into smooth and less costly implementation scenarios. Therefore, incorporating arts and culture has cost-savings potential, since it can build better community relationships upfront. Less effective engagement practices leave the community feeling their voices have not been heard or their concerns have not been considered. Their subsequent opposition can cause delays and cost increases. Beyond the ethics of having a good relationship with the community the institution was created to serve, avoiding opposition delays and costs is a high-priority financial incentive for any transportation infrastructure project.

Creating placemaking work that results in productive community engagement will add some time to the "upfront" time of engagement processes. Agencies must enroll the right project partners and design an effective creative placemaking strategy to do good outreach. But the value of this time is demonstrated in several of our studies and far outweighs the time and cost of opposition delays. The Mariposa Creek Parkway case study brought forth high participation numbers and a depth of engagement with underrepresented groups during Creek Week in a way that one or two meetings at the local library never could. Likewise, the Atlanta Regional Commission's efforts to develop creative placemaking skills and an understanding of planning processes in local community and arts organizations take time and energy, but the agency is ensuring positive future engagement outcomes when it can call on these organizations to lead engagement efforts in their communities. In each case, upfront efforts will likely limit opposition and costly delays caused by limited or poor outreach.

Differences in the perception of timelines and project momentum are another important element to consider in building community trust. We've termed the standard time of a transportation project as "geologic time," because, for members of the community who do not understand the complexity of the planning and implementation process, it can appear as if "nothing" is happening. The work of change on the "inside" is imperceptible at the community level. Therefore, transparency and communication are extremely important. In the Barrio Logan community, residents were euphoric to learn about funding for mural restoration in the park in 2002. But when the actual painting did not commence until 2011, they lost faith in Caltrans, believing the agency misappropriated the federal grant funds, causing the delay. For Caltrans this length of time seemed perfectly normal for a unique project. Failing to reconcile these differences in time perceptions through good communications with communities led to mistrust.

Regarding communication, our case studies showed that multiple iterations of plans, processes and expected outcomes are often needed between the state agency and the community for each to understand the other's perspective, what's possible and desired on the project, and the role the community can take in shaping the project. One important way to build trust with local communities is by making sure everyone is speaking the same language. This might mean literally, as in the case of the Jade-Midway Corridor in Portland. Translation was carried out in multiple languages as part of the creative engagement to meet community needs. It might also mean a certain amount of education is necessary on the part of DOT staff to ensure the right partners with the needed language skills and cultural knowledge are enrolled to help with participation. And enrolling artists and culture bearers from the local community to creatively interpret and translate institutional concepts was effective in our case studies.

Education about local dynamics may also be appropriate for DOT staff to ensure the stakeholders are properly recognized for the role they play in the community. As we found with the Atlanta Regional Council, local arts and cultural organizations who were major economic contributors in their communities were historically excluded from planning and economic development discussions. When recognized for their contributions through the Culture and Community Building program, they were willing to tap into their networks and increase input and involvement in transportation projects. Likewise, in the Mariposa Creek Parkway case study, Caltrans staff gained through creative placemaking efforts an understating of the Indigenous cultural practice for removing roadside and trailside

vegetation. Local tribes felt respected and worked to enroll their communities in the engagement process. In sum, acknowledging local and cultural knowledge will foster community member support and increase participation, while also building relationships for future collaborations.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Incorporating arts and culture has cost-savings potential, since it can build better community relationships upfront and avoid the costs of opposition delays.
- Transparency and good communication through regular updates, even if nothing is moving forward, are essential to maintaining the trust of affected communities. And sharing details about restrictions and constraints faced by the DOT, such as funding prohibitions and internal regulations, can alleviate potential mistrust.
- Public engagement might involve multiple iterations between DOT staff, local community, and other relevant organizations before mutual understandings are achieved.
- Educating DOT staff about local and cultural knowledge, such as language, and enrolling the right partners, artists and culture bearers is essential in gaining the respect and support of the community while also making the engagement process more equitable and useful.
- Beyond explaining technical terms at a public meeting or providing the glossary in a report, engineers and planners need a good understanding of the issues and concerns of the local community so they can present technical solutions or findings within the context of those issues and concerns.

Public engagement as a part of project development often follows a very standard type of timeline. The community is informed at different phases of project development, and input is formally sought before approvals can take place. What multiple case studies showed, however, is that a more informal means of communication is essential to overcoming misperceptions and mistrust. DOT staff need to be transparent about progress and delays and assure communities of priorities. Most important, every case study demonstrates the importance of enrolling artists and culture bearers in the process, because using creative ways of communicating project information and community needs and concerns plays a critical role in the way communities perceive their relationship with the institution, and therefore whether or not they will feel empowered or disenfranchised by their participation.

5.1.2.2 Finding #4: Engagement efforts that incorporate arts and culture succeed in reaching communities not traditionally heard from. (ARC, Mariposa Creek, Portland)

This finding is especially important in work intended to mitigate past harms around transportation infrastructure. Standard methods of public engagement that include daytime public meetings at transportation agency headquarters are inaccessible for many. Even evening or weekend meetings at a local public place like a library are not always accessible and are often more amenable to delivering information as opposed to interacting and exchanging ideas. DOTs have worked to expand their engagement opportunities with online surveys, participation at community meetings, and hosted booths at community events. Historically underrepresented communities, however, still struggle to participate in these outreach efforts, in part because they may not feel welcome due to language or cultural

barriers, or past experiences with discrimination. Yet, historic inequities and harms in transportation planning were experienced most by communities of color and lower-income, transit-dependent, Indigenous, and immigrant communities. Therefore, efforts to improve engagement should prioritize these very communities. And the focus should not be on changing the location or the time, but on overcoming the feelings of unwelcomeness.

Arts, culture and creative placemaking practices offer creative ways to overcome language and culture barriers. They institute interactive practices that lead to learning on both sides, and they offer creativity to mitigation efforts. The Jade-Midway Corridor case study provides an excellent example of how transportation agencies can extend outreach beyond the traditional practices and venues. They began by hosting meetings at alternate times and in alternate locations — seeking out community centers and other familiar venues. They expanded these changes to include alternative meeting formats and languages, with additional interpreters for less commonly spoken languages. They brought in culturally appropriate foods, as well. They had local and cultural knowledge of the communities in the corridor and were able to gain participation from elderly people, Chinese-speaking populations and young people — all groups that had low participation rates in the past. The use of art in public engagement was also noteworthy here: Many of the public meetings were more like workshops, where artists used various fun activities to gather public input, which the transportation agencies could then act on.

Outreach work in the Nolensville Pike case study started with the observation that it was difficult to cross a major highway to get to a childcare center and needed to take into account the specific characteristics of the community. The largest Kurdish community in the U.S. is in this corridor, and immigrants from this community have faced unique challenges regarding language, cultural understanding and economic access. This underrepresented group was the focus of a culturally sensitive engagement approach that resulted in a set of functional improvements to crosswalks, wayfinding signs and bus stops that simultaneously celebrated the identity of the community.

As noted in earlier examples, creative placemaking efforts described in the Mariposa Creek Parkway case study fostered participation from Native American tribes, and the Atlanta Regional Commission's invitations to cultural organizations were intentional, bringing Black and Arab groups to the table to become future community leaders in engagement. And the decades of creative placemaking work in Chicano Park has also taught, through struggle and education, the Latinx community to be leaders in engagement, as well.

RECOMMENDATION:

- Use arts and culture bearers as part of engagement processes to enhance existing outreach methods.

This recommendation overlaps with a number of those above. It involves thinking of art and culture as something more than finished artworks, offers the opportunity to draw on external funding sources to support the work of artists in engagement, and provides a way for state DOTs to understand the language of local communities. As discussed by one of our interviewees in Portland, it also demonstrates

how putting in more effort early in the project can pay off through community support and a smoother acceptance of the project later.

Perhaps more important, using arts and culture in public engagement allows for a more authentic interaction with local communities. They will feel empowered to express what is most important to them, even if it doesn't seem like it's about transportation. Concerns about affordable housing, childcare access or the vitality of small businesses might seem to be outside the purview of a state DOT. Community members, however, recognize that these things are all connected, and their concerns about large infrastructure projects often revolve around how those other aspects of their lives will be affected. Understanding that connection and acting on it is another way to gain community trust and produce a better piece of infrastructure.

5.1.3 Findings Regarding Partnering with Artists

5.1.3.1 Finding #5: When artists are engaged early in the process and allowed more creative freedom, better results follow. (Chicano Park, El Paso, Grand Marais, Nolensville Pike, Pawtucket, Tucson)

Because of the entrenched understanding of art as an aesthetic or beautification product, often an afterthought placed in the right of way after infrastructure has been built, it can be hard for institutions to shift their understanding of art to see it as engagement and a community trust-building tool that can shape transportation projects themselves. However, this broader understanding clarifies a more relevant role for, and value to, the incorporation of the arts and inclusion of artists as part of the planning and engagement process. Inclusion, as early as possible, is recommended, and it may even be beneficial to have artists lead in aspects of the creative design and engagement processes. Our case studies show artists can offer creative ways to problem solve, and they know what is important to the local community, because they are often part of that community themselves. Even if they are not part of the community, their artistic process is a tool for overcoming barriers to understanding planning and engineering concepts and opening conversations for community members to express their concerns, needs and ideas.

In the El Paso streetcar case study, the artist translated the idea for a needed modern-day alternative form of transportation by tapping nostalgia for the community's shared cross-border identity and decommissioned streetcar system. As a grassroots effort, it is like the murals in Chicano Park and the creek side parkway in Mariposa — the community was offering the local municipality the opportunity to understand who they were and what their needs were. The case study exemplifies the role artists can play in transportation planning when they use their understanding of the community and their creativity in engaging the community and local institutions around that understanding. The revived streetcar provides not just a form of mobility but an acknowledgement of how important the connection to the border is to the people who live in El Paso. And in the end, the artists' intervention was fundamental to the success of enrolling regional support for the restoration of the streetcar service.

Often, unexpected benefits arose from engagement with artists. For example, during the first restoration project at Chicano Park, artists provided the knowledge that became a published guide to

mural restoration at Caltrans, and during the second mural restoration project, artists were experimenting with new materials. This innovation meant the mural could be painted elsewhere, easily placed on the infrastructure and easily removed if need be. The artist's introduction of the technology could lead to more communities applying this technique to mitigate the impact of infrastructure throughout the state. In Chicano Park, the artists introduced creative solutions because they knew the murals were extremely important to the Latinx communities, and Caltrans expressed a willingness to learn from and collaborate with the artists. Pawtucket, on the other hand, provided a cautionary tale that suggests artists and local governments must engage with DOTs early in the public art process to make sure they understand any technical limitations. Because records about the city and DOT interaction were limited, it is unclear how much collaboration existed, but a clear understanding of a project's feasibility should be considered in tandem with the artists' and the community's engagement in the envisioning process.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Let artists lead, as early in the process as possible.
- Respect artists as workers, entrepreneurs and contractors whose contributions are more than aesthetic.
- Ensure that artists as businesses have the tools to engage with state bureaucracies and that those bureaucracies in turn are equipped to support artists' work.

Enlarging the scope of public engagement to involve arts and culture activities means ceding a certain amount of control to the workers who will be carrying out those activities. Across our case studies, the projects considered the most successful by artists, communities and state agencies were those allowing artists more creative freedom. This approach allows artists to draw on their own expertise regarding social and economic issues in the local context. Respect them as knowledgeable people who can substantively contribute to the conversation. Also, consider the skills of artist entrepreneurs and reflect on the ways they can contribute to institutional memory that is so often missing from infrastructure projects.

Artists are also small-business owners whose size and capabilities may limit their ability to participate in transportation infrastructure projects. In the case of Chicano Park, artists needed to work through a project management consultant to meet bonding and insurance requirements, but as subcontractors they suffered economic hardship, because the bureaucratic layering of invoices meant delayed reimbursement for their work. Institutions and partners can collaborate to ensure that all small businesses involved in the project receive compensation in a timely manner. Further, institutions can assess their policies around bonding and insurance requirements, making them commensurate with the size of the business, and they can provide help in navigating vendor and procurement systems as they do for other businesses. Recognizing the artist's professional status would help these entrepreneurs more productively contribute to the work of state DOTs.

We experienced the importance of this finding in our own project. Our initial proposal included hiring artists to document the long-term effects of some of our case-study subjects. However, since we are not

familiar with most of the communities in which our case studies are based, we did not have existing relationships to build on in finding artists to carry out this work. Had we reached out to artists earlier in the process as we were still developing our understandings of the case studies and made it clear that we were looking for interpretive work rather than aesthetics, we might have been more successful at this part of the project.

5.2 ARTIST-IN-RESIDENCE PROGRAMS

We conclude the Summary and Recommendations section with our findings from our research into four artist-in-residence programs (AIR). Our findings demonstrate the importance and value in letting artists lead in their creative work around processes and projects. The case studies represent a broad spectrum of creative freedom in the artist's role, from Washington DOT where artists were given free rein within the organization, to Minnesota and Chattanooga where they were given specific themes but allowed some freedom to "create," to Los Angeles where decision-makers expect a quantitative outcome. Based on our interviews with the artists and the agencies and reviews of archival materials, the greatest satisfaction and the most acknowledged successes were evident when the artists led the way. The brief synopses that follow will provide insight into why tensions exist in these AIR programming attempts within the DOTs, and they also highlight the many barriers to success that exist. Several programs are currently being reevaluated, and unfortunately, the agencies are focused on creating more prescribed projects that will curtail much of the outside-the-box thinking that AIRs are supposed to foster within the artist and the institution. Our overarching recommendation, however, is for transportation agencies to not prescribe what kind of art will be produced or what outcome the art should have, but to let the artists do their job in a supported environment, which will require agencies to recalibrate their expectations as well as their current program configurations.

5.2.1 Findings and Recommendations

As noted, while the intent of AIR programs is to foster outside-the-box thinking, this type of program can be expected to move seamlessly into the realm of structured rollouts and timelines. The strict organizational structure within a DOT is necessary in the management of large-scale, long-term projects that depend on legislative funding and answer to that legislature on behalf of the taxpayers. This reality creates a system where every action is an accountable action. Introducing a program where actions are not prescribed or quantifiably accountable is doable, but it will take thoughtful integration. In the case studies we examined, thoughtful integration was mostly problematic. The primary issues were in the way the programs were configured, the lack of introduction provided to and by management and staff, and the limited city-wide understanding and support of creative placemaking practices and artists methods.

Regarding the configuration, some programs like WSDOT's and MnDOT's were introduced and administered by an outside partner. Smart Growth America (SGA) provided an excellent opportunity for both DOTs to gain experience with an AIR. In managing the calls for and contracting of the artists, they minimized some of the learning curve for each DOT. But they also allowed for too much

autonomy in a program that the DOTs had no prior experience with, and, because the program did not arise through internal need, may not have had sufficient institutional support for such projects.

LADOT's collaborative configuration applied administrative and funding functions to the Department of Cultural Affairs but gave day-to-day supervisory responsibility to the city's DOT. The DOT had no experience with artists, and the supervisors were unfamiliar with creative placemaking practices, making it hard for the artist to achieve buy-in for their concepts and leaving them feeling isolated.

The sense of isolation was compounded by the lack of introduction that accompanied the AIR programs. DOT staff in the Chattanooga program struggled to understand where the artist fit into the DOT hierarchy in a part-time temporary role. AIR program managers should initiate conversations to explain the artist's role as more of a contracted business than a "guest." In many of the programs, the staff the artists were asked to engage with did not seem to be aware of the agency's goals in adopting the program. Artists in Los Angeles and Minnesota suggested that some staff resented the added burden of working with the artist.

In the main, champions of the program needed to foster a more collaborative space for the artists to work with DOT staff, explain the goals of the residency, and allow staff the time within their day to engage, alleviating some of the "time pressure" felt by both the staff and the artist. Further, program managers could also explicitly ask staff to accommodate the different approaches to engagement practiced by different artists.

In interviews with representatives from both LADOT and CDOT, it was suggested that the lack of city-wide support for policies that incorporate arts, culture and creative placemaking into all aspects of the city's work meant the AIR program was not a high priority. The grant director in Los Angeles suggested that senior leadership in the LADOT were closed to new ideas on how to motivate staff around people-centered ways of thinking. So, although the lower-level engineering staff gained a lot from the artists' workshops on empathy, there was no support to sustain the work.

AIR programming was also susceptible to changes based on the new political vision of incoming elected officials. WSDOT's program funding shifted from external grants the first year to 50% WSDOT and 50% external the second year, opening the program to more legislative scrutiny and a less sustainable future. But WSDOT supported the flexible nature of the artists' nonspecific deliverables and the way artists listened to staff needs and interests and developed projects based on what they heard. In this case, the artists felt supported in their residencies. At MnDOT, concerns over the wording and justification of anything related to sustainability were greatly diminished after the November 2022 election, when the state legislature contained a majority of Democrats, making it easier for the artist in residence to work.

Champions of the AIR programs also need to address the possibility of tension that may arise between the artists' creative freedom and management and staff expectations. Artists wanted freedom to devise their own ways to assess the needs of the agency and develop a solution, but this did not always meet the expectations by DOT management and staff. An avenue for reducing this tension is to clearly define project goals and timelines for the artist. But this can also reduce the

creative potential of the process or project solution. Reshaping management and staff expectations is the more appropriate approach, since the case studies indicate that greater creative freedom in WSDOT's program and in the first artist residencies at MnDOT and LADOT produced the most impactful outcomes. Being open to the integration of more than one type of arts and culturally based project, such as storytelling, is also less limiting for the artist and could solve this tension and make the artist feel more supported. This is not to say that AIR programs need to be completely open-ended; artists can benefit from having themes or ideas to work with as a means of channeling creativity.

- Finally, both MnDOT and WSDOT partnered with SGA. But a national organization may not have the same capacity to support a local artist as a local organization might. Building relationships at the local level might open more supportive resources for the artists during their residencies, and the organization might also have more capacity to support DOT management and staff as issues or questions arise. This is not to say that a local arts organization will necessarily have that capacity, either. The DOT needs to be sure it can support artists during their residencies. That means not only funding and space but also making sure there is a liaison whose job includes introducing the artist to DOT staff and ensuring DOT staff can take time from their usual duties to interact with the artist.

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